







**Investigating the Narration of Nations:  
Promoting Canadian Passion for Winter Sports and their Aboriginal Heritage in  
VANOC's 2010 Olympic Brand Identity and Marketing Campaign**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation is an analysis of VANOC's images in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. It attempts to provide an in-depth analysis of how VANOC's images helped produce romanticised and mythologised narratives of Canadian society, culture and values to attract tourism from abroad and create a 'feel-good factor' for the Canadian public. By using semiological analysis I show how two narratives emphasised core Canadian characteristics that would make the host attractive to an international audience whilst also reminding the home audience of their shared values.

In chapter four I argue that Canadian passion for winter sport was emphasised through various images. Central to my analysis of the winter sports images are Vancouver's atypical winter climate, the Northern myth and hockey. In chapter five I discuss how VANOC misrepresented and appropriated Aboriginal heritage to produce an outdated and uncontroversial representation that emphasised the 'Performing Indian' and 'Vanishing Indian' myths. I conclude this dissertation by considering how the two narratives are related and by proposing future research that could enable us to better understand host narratives.



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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b>	1
<b><u>CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW</u></b>	10
Narrating Canada at Mega-Events	12
Promoting Canada's Aboriginal Heritage at Mega-Events	25
<b><u>CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY</u></b>	36
Analysing Images Using Semiology	36
VANOC's 2010 Olympic Brand Identity and Marketing Campaign	43
Supporting My Image Analysis	49
<b><u>CHAPTER THREE - BENEFITS OF HOSTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES</u></b>	55
The VBC and the 2010 Olympic Bid	57
VANOC, the 2010 Olympics and Public Opposition	62
The Olympic Games, Place Promotion and Myth-Making	66

<b><u>CHAPTER 4 – NARRATIVE OF CANADIAN PASSION</u></b>	73
<b><u>FOR WINTER SPORT</u></b>	
Significance of Sport in Canadian Society and Culture	74
Images of Winter Olympians and Canadian Sports Fans	81
The Northern Myth, Hockey and the Canadian Landscape at the 2010 Olympics	91
<b><u>CHAPTER FIVE: ABORIGINAL NARRATIVES AT</u></b>	103
<b><u>THE 2010 OLYMPICS:</u></b>	
Canada’s Aboriginal Heritage from Colonisation to the 2010 Olympics	105
The VBC’s Promotion of Canada’s Aboriginal Heritage	116
The 2010 Olympic Logo and Mascots	118
The 2010 Olympic Opening Ceremony	129
‘Authentic’ Aboriginal Tourism and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C.	135
<b><u>CONCLUSION</u></b>	140
<b><u>REFERENCES</u></b>	145

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the late twentieth and early twenty-first century the Olympics gained a reputation as one of the most lucrative international sporting events because of the global exposure bidding cities believed it could provide. The subsequent publicity received from hosting the Olympics increased due to the improvement of telecommunications technology which has seen audience figures rise dramatically. At the 1936 Berlin Olympics only eleven countries had access to the television coverage but at the 1976 Montreal Olympics it had risen to 124 (Toohey and Veal 2007: 148). This figure then doubled to 220 at the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics accompanied by record audience viewing figures of 3.9 billion (Toohey and Veal 2007: 148; 157). During the 2010 Vancouver-Whistler Winter Olympics<sup>1</sup>, 3.8 billion people across the globe watched some aspect of the television coverage, while an estimated 325,000 people visited British Columbia (B.C.) for the event (PWC 2010: 17).

Cities like Vancouver have relentlessly pursued the chance to host the Summer or Winter Olympics as “valuable promotional opportunities” to showcase their attractions, seduce tourists and seek business investment on a global scale (Whitson and Horne 2006: 74). C. Michael Hall (1998; 2003; 2006) believes that mega-events, like the Olympics, are often part of imaging strategies which create specific representations of a host city. These images are chosen to attract new economic investment or tourism by packaging “specific representations of a particular way of life or lifestyle” as a product to be sold and consumed by a global audience (2003: 200). Furthermore, Hall argues that imaging strategies can also help to “increase public spirit by making communities feel good about themselves” (2003:

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth referred to as the 2010 Olympics.

200).

I argue that the Vancouver Organising Committee (VANOC) used the 2010 Olympics as an imaging strategy to maximise the event's impact on tourism and the 'feel-good' factor by presenting two romanticised and mythologised narratives of Canadian culture, history, and values. I suggest that by promoting Canadian values through their narratives, VANOC hoped to promote an attractive image of Canada that would appeal to an international and home audience. While the former would see Canada as a desirable place to visit, the latter would be reminded of the common positive values that unite them.

VANOC's first narrative portrayed Canada as a successful Winter Olympic nation with a passionate home audience whose lives are characterised by their love for winter sports, especially ice hockey. VANOC's second narrative focused on the Canadian population embracing their Aboriginal heritage. The 2010 Olympics were the first Games to officially recognise the host city's indigenous population as co-hosts, known as the Four Host First Nations (FHFN). However, the narrative that VANOC constructed to promote this partnership mythologised and romanticised Aboriginal culture and society. This dissertation is an investigation into how VANOC produced these narratives by critically analysing image production in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Image production is an integral part of the process organising committees undergo to promote their Olympic event and the host country. Nancy Rivenburgh notes, however, that using the Olympics as a "global image-making endeavour comes with significant costs and challenges" and argues that, "even the most organised of hosts cannot control all aspects of the event" (2004: 5-6). One aspect which can be controlled by the host, to some extent, is the Olympic brand identity and the subsequent marketing campaign created to promote it. The brand identity of an Olympic Games is mainly composed of a logo, motto and mascots.

Meanwhile, features of the marketing campaign include, but are not limited to: bid books, posters, promotional videos, the handover ceremony at their predecessor's Games and their own Olympic opening and closing ceremonies. An organising committee's brand identity and marketing campaign contains a plethora of images intended to advertise the event and promote an attractive vision of the host in front of a global and domestic audience.

At the 2010 Olympics these images helped to construct the romanticised and mythologised narratives about Canada's relationship with winter sport and their Aboriginal heritage. The topic of the 2010 Olympics is part of a growing field of research related to the representation of Canada at previous mega-events. Chapter one offers a literature review of the most pertinent examples and attempts to draw comparisons to my study of the 2010 Olympics. The first section discusses the general representation of Canadian narratives at the 1954 Vancouver Commonwealth Games, Montreal's Expo in 1967, the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics and the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics.<sup>2</sup> It also highlights the changes in society between these previous mega-events and the 2010 Olympics. The second section gives an overview of how previous organising committees have promoted Canada's Aboriginal heritage by focusing on some of the studies that have analysed Expo '67 and the 1976 and 2010 Olympics. Furthermore, this part of the literature review introduces some of the political and social changes for Canada's Aboriginal community since the last Olympics on Canadian soil in 1988. This chapter concludes by introducing my thesis on the winter sports and Aboriginal narratives.

Chapter two outlines the semiological analysis I applied to explain how VANOC's images reflected specific romantic and mythologised Canadian values. This chapter provides a brief background into image analysis, with a particular focus on Roland Barthes and his

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<sup>2</sup> Referred to in the following way for the remainder of this dissertation: 1954 Commonwealth Games, Expo '67, 1976 Olympics, 1988 Olympics.

essay 'Myth Today' (1957). It then outlines the questions I answered in order to analyse VANOC's images and introduces the sources used to collect the images discussed in chapters four and five. These included the bid books, bid video *It's Our Time to Shine*, logo, mascots, posters, a promotional video called *With Glowing Hearts*, the 2006 Turin handover ceremony and the 2010 opening and closing ceremonies. This chapter then outlines how archival and newspaper research substantiated my critical analysis by providing an insight into VANOC's mission and vision for the event, as well as the media and public reaction to the narratives used.

Chapter three presents a brief overview on the bidding and preparation for the 2010 Olympics by outlining the economic problems that VANOC faced and the criticism they received from 2010 Olympic naysayers. I argue that any guarantee of the economic benefits from hosting the 2010 Olympics amidst a world recession were uncertain. The rest of chapter three proposes two alternative motivations that VANOC possibly had for hosting the 2010 Olympics. Firstly, it looks at how hosting the event was an opportunity to promote Vancouver and Canada as a tourist destination to a captive Olympic audience. Secondly, it suggests that mega-events, like the 2010 Olympics, are used as an opportunity to boost public morale by reminding citizens of their values. These are just two of the other benefits organising committees seek from the exposure of hosting mega-events like the Olympics. This chapter concludes by introducing the concept of myth-making and how it is used to pursue the two benefits before leading on to an analysis of how myth operates in the two narratives.

Chapter four analyses how VANOC disseminated the narrative of Canadian passion for winter sports in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. Whilst this type of narrative is not particularly unusual given that it was the Winter Olympics, I argue that it was overly emphasised by VANOC. There are two possible explanations for why this

occurred. Firstly, the choice of Vancouver as the 2010 Olympic hosts was unusual given the city's mild climate. Thus, images of winter sport needed to be emphasised to show Vancouver as an active winter sport city. Secondly, winter is a key feature in the concept of the 'Northern myth' (Berger 1966; Coleman 2008; Grace 1997; Hulan 2002) which can be found in VANOC's narrative of winter sports.

Daniel Francis explains how the North exists outside of its geographical location into "a north of the mind" which has "provided an identifiable marker for Canadianness" (1997: 152). This 'Northern myth' has held a strong presence in the Canadian psyche for much of the twentieth century and still endures today. The central idea behind the 'Northern myth' according to Daniel Coleman is that "the rigours of life in a stern, unaccommodating climate demanded strength of body, character, and mind while it winnowed away laziness, overindulgence and false social niceties" (2006: 24). In addition to this, Renee Hulan believes the 'Northern myth' revolves around masculine qualities such as "self-reliance, autonomy and physical endurance" (Hulan 2002: 18). As a result, the 'Northern myth' has often been criticised for presenting a view of Canada that strongly demarcates along gender and racial boundaries (Grace 2002: 72; Hulan 2002: 19).

Before analysing how winter and the 'Northern myth' is present in VANOC's first narrative, chapter four provides a brief background into why hockey is significant in Canadian history, society and culture and how it fits in with the 'Northern myth.' The main part of chapter four explains how the Canadian values associated with the 'Northern myth' were present in VANOC's narrative of a nation passionate about watching and participating in winter sports. There were two ways that VANOC achieved this. Firstly, VANOC included many images of celebrating Canadian Olympians and passionate spectators. Secondly, they framed Vancouver as an active winter sports city, in spite of its mild-coastal climate, and



illustrated Canadians engaged in recreational winter sport. The final part of chapter four further explains how this narrative was romanticised and mythologised by firstly examining images of hockey in VANOC's 2010 Olympic marketing campaign. I argue that the images that VANOC chose either offered a white, masculine view of hockey or emphasised the sport's connection to the land which both strengthened the 'Northern myth' and the values associated with it.

Chapter five investigates how the second narrative of embracing Canada's Aboriginal heritage was produced and disseminated by VANOC in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign<sup>3</sup>. It begins with an overview of the relationship between Canada's Aboriginal population and the federal and provincial governments. It explains how after a sustained period of mutual trading, Aboriginal Canadians were subject to an assimilationist policy whereby their traditional lifestyle and culture was suppressed. It also discusses how their culture was appropriated and misrepresented in the twentieth century, before summarising Aboriginal political and social issues since the 1988 Calgary Olympics. This provides a context for my analysis of VANOC's Aboriginal narrative.

I contend that VANOC's images portrayed an out-dated representation of Aboriginal people and appropriated Aboriginal cultural symbols. In addition to this, VANOC ignored Canada's colonial past and the current social injustices faced by Canada's Aboriginal communities to create the impression of a socially harmonious relationship. This enabled them to promote 'common' Canadian values of diversity and tolerance which would appeal to the international audience whilst boosting Canadian public morale. The myths that helped VANOC to achieve this narrative are the "Performing Indian" and the "Vanishing Indian"

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<sup>3</sup> Throughout this dissertation I use the term Aboriginal rather than First Nations and Indian. When quoting directly from sources I maintain the term used by the author. It is also vital to emphasise that the diversity of Canada's Aboriginal people is immense and as such I have attempted to produce a discussion that focuses predominately on the host region B.C.

(Francis 1992: 16; 97). Both these concepts emphasise Canada's Aboriginal population in stereotypical ways. While the former relies upon showcasing the performance aspect of Canada's Aboriginal heritage, the latter myth portrays Aboriginal people as a dying race that is not suited to white-Canadian civilisation.

The key examples this chapter focuses on are the 2010 Olympic logo, the mascots, the Turin handover ceremony and the 2010 opening ceremony. I analyse how the images themselves romanticised and mythologised the narrative, whilst also comparing them to another representation of Aboriginal culture. In this instance, I compare VANOC's image production to some of the images on the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia's (ATBC) website. The three images I look at illustrate a more 'authentic' view of Aboriginal culture and society through their promotion of B.C. Aboriginal tourism.

This study concludes by discussing how the two narratives operate in relation to one another as an imaging strategy that emphasises particular Canadian values to maximise tourism and the 'feel-good' factor. The main comparison is that both narratives are mythologised and romanticised by VANOC in order to produce an attractive image of the host at the 2010 Olympics. I argue that the reliance on myths in particular allowed VANOC to promote the Canadian values that represented Canada favourably in front of a global and home audience. The myths that are the focus of this investigation promoted Canadian values such as adaptability, perseverance, tolerance and diversity. I also propose two other comparisons that can be made between the two narratives.

Firstly, the role of the Canadian landscape is relevant to both of VANOC's narratives. Landscape is a crucial factor in the first narrative because it serves as an arena which allows Canadians to participate in their passion for winter sports. Furthermore, landscape is also central to the Canadian story that revolves around the 'Northern myth' and it is frequently

suggested that sport is one way that has allowed Canadians to adapt to the harsh environment that surrounds them. In relation to the second narrative the theme of the Canadian landscape is a particularly sensitive issue. Firstly, the 2010 Olympics took place on the ancestral lands of the FHFN, a fact that is officially recognised by VANOC. This presence, however, is not visually acknowledged through VANOC's brand identity and marketing campaign - the disappearance of Canada's First Nations in the opening ceremony's 'Landscape of a Dream,' for example. This is further complicated by the ongoing land claim cases that take place in Canada, particularly in B.C.

The second comparison that can be made between the two narratives is concerned with how they both exclude or marginalise certain aspects of Canadian society. While the narrative of passion for winter sports emphasises white-masculine Canada by displaying no obvious markers of ethnicity, the second narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage isolates the Aboriginal population from mainstream Canada and in some cases ignores it all together. These are just two of the parallels that be drawn between the two narratives I explore. This study concludes by suggesting alternative directions of research that are needed to interrogate these narratives further.

Ultimately, this dissertation is my attempt to address a gap in current research about host nations at the Olympic Games. No major studies, that I am aware of, focus on analysing mega-event brand identities and marketing campaigns while other topics, such as the economic legacies of hosting mega-events, have gained significant attention (Blake 2005; Crompton and McKay 1994; Dwyer, Forsyth and Spurr 2005; Gratton and Henry 2001). Scholars have recognised that determining the extent and success of economic legacies in the post mega-event city, however, is difficult (Whitson and Horne 2006; Ferguson et al. 2011; Kidd 2011). Thus, until sufficient analytical frameworks are developed, I propose that studies

should concentrate on the images used by organising committees to promote narratives of the host city and/or country.

## **CHAPTER ONE – LITERATURE REVIEW**

The 2010 Olympics were the third instance that Canada had hosted such an event. Since the mid-twentieth century Canadian cities have endeavoured to raise their profile on the global stage, economically compete with others and acquire recognition as ‘world class cities’ (Hall 2003: 203; Shaw 2003: 363). One popular strategy pursued to achieve these goals is to bid for and host international mega-events. This topic is a popular choice with academic scholars who seek to explore the social and cultural make-up of the cities and/or countries that host them.

Mega-events are defined by Leo Jago, Larry Dwyer, Geoffrey Lipman, Daneel van Lill and Shaun Vorster as large-scale sport, cultural or business events that are characterised by “global publicity... substantial international visitation” and are “associated with large-scale economic, social or environmental impacts” (Jago et al. 2010: 222). Similarly, Maurice Roche’s definition describes them as “large-scale cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international ‘significance’” (2000: 1). The two mega-events most commonly researched by scholars are World’s Fairs and the Olympics. Studies range from investigations into the economic and social impacts of mega-event hosting, the configuration of national and/or civic identities, environmental sustainability, and the role of ethnicity and gender in sport.<sup>4</sup> This literature review, however, analyses the host narratives produced and disseminated by Canadian organising committees and provincial governments.

The three best examples are former Olympic host cities Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver. David Whitson argues that mega-events have been used by these Canadian cities

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<sup>4</sup> For an extensive bibliography on Olympic studies see Gold, John, R and Gold, Margaret M., 2011. *Olympic Cities: City Agendas, Planning, and the World’s Games, 1896-2016*. London: Routledge.

as promotional opportunities to “demonstrate to visitors and potential investors that they are economically dynamic, technologically advanced and culturally sophisticated” (2004: 1218). In other words, mega-events such as the Olympic Games are “signalling” opportunities which allow the host to “reframe dominant narratives” and “reinforce key messages about what the host has become/is becoming” (Black 2006: 262). David Black explains that obligatory features of the Olympics, such as the “elaborately staged opening and closing ceremonies,” enable hosts to “package and project an appealing (and inevitably stylised and simplified) narrative concerning the host” (2006: 264). He argues that mega-events have been favoured by Canadian cities as opportunities for (re)framing narratives to the extent that they have “become a mega-event ‘addict’” (2006: 262).

This literature review focuses on some of the most pertinent studies that relate to the theme of multiple host narratives. I review the different approaches taken by researchers to analyse how narratives of the host city and/or nation have been constructed and promulgated by organising committees and governments. Some of the narratives I discuss include the theme of modernity, contrasting feelings of national and regional pride, and visual representations of Canada. I then introduce my own thesis regarding multiple narratives at the 2010 Olympics. This literature review also explores the various narratives used to illustrate Canada’s Aboriginal heritage at mega-events. I review articles that discuss the role of Aboriginal people in the production of these narratives and how organising committees appropriated Aboriginal culture. I conclude by introducing my own investigation that is the focus of chapter five.

## **Narrating Canada at Mega-Events**

One of the earliest Canadian mega-events was the 1954 Vancouver Commonwealth Games which took place between the 30th July and the 7th August and were funded by federal, provincial and city governments. Michael Dawson discusses the event's multiple narratives in his article, 'Acting Global, Thinking Local: 'Liquid Imperialism' and the Multiple Meanings of the 1954 British Empire & Commonwealth Games' (2006). Dawson explains how the event was "part of an ongoing conversation and debate about Canada's continuing imperial connection" (2011: 791).

He provides newspaper commentary from the period including one article from *The Vancouver Sun* which described how the opening ceremony would "illustrate the continuing glory of the British Empire and Commonwealth unity" (2006: 7). Another example that Dawson refers to is an article by Harold Weir who believed that the 1954 Commonwealth Games would allow the "welding together of many nations under the splendour of human fellowship" (2006: 8). Overall, Dawson contends that Games organisers, the press and members of the public hoped the event would allow Vancouver "to selflessly contribute to what they understood to be a positive and worthy imperial endeavour" (2011: 792).

As well as the event's strong imperialist overtones, Dawson argues that the 1954 Commonwealth Games are remembered for the emphasis that organisers and politicians placed on the publicity that hosting would bring. He explains how host cities between 1950 and 1990 have often "sought international publicity, increased tourist revenue, economic development and sports infrastructure" from hosting the Commonwealth Games (2011: 788). In the case of 1954, there were many debates about the global exposure that hosting the event would bring. Both Mayor Charles Thompson and the Executive Secretary of the Vancouver

Board of Trade, Reg Rose, agreed that the event would bring “world-wide publicity” (Dawson 2006: 14).

Games organisers and supporters also believed this world-wide exposure would enhance Vancouver’s chances of attracting future international sporting events. One vocal supporter was Jack Harrison who had been the president of the British Columbia Track and Field Association in 1954. According to Dawson, he “eagerly anticipated a legacy of sports facilities that would give ‘the city... a great chance for yet greater shows’” as well as inserting Vancouver into “the ranks of other metropolitan cities” in North America (2011: 793). Dawson also believes that exposure from hosting the event was an chance to overcome Vancouver’s feeling of isolation within Canada. He describes how “once the Games were secured there was both a sense of relief and a desire to ensure that this opportunity for demonstrating Western Canadian ingenuity was not wasted” (2011: 793).

Dawson’s investigation into the multiple narratives of the 1954 Commonwealth Games is particularly relevant to my study on the 2010 Olympics. Both events communicated various narratives about the host city and/or nation to the audiences they were targeted towards. While Dawson discusses the multiple narratives through the opinions of Games organisers and promoters, there is little discussion about how the narratives were present in the event itself. I aim to analyse how the narratives I discuss can be interpreted from the different features of the 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Ambitions to redesign a host city’s image were also part of Montreal’s strategy for pursuing mega-events in the 1960s and 1970s. Despite Montreal once being “the largest metropolitan area in Canada and the country’s economic and cultural hub,” its governments and businesses have sought to promote the city on the world stage (Paul 2004: 573). Ever since Expo ‘67 and the 1976 Olympics, Montreal’s government and business elite have



continued to pursue international events in order illustrate Montreal as “an economically booming and culturally vibrant city” and a prime “global destination for tourists and investors” (Whitson 2004: 1219). Darel E. Paul (2004: 579) and Whitson (2004: 1219) both agree that Montreal’s fascination with international mega-events originated as part of former Mayor Jean Drapeau’s project to re-image the city as ‘world-class’ in the 1960s and 1970s.

The first event, Expo ‘67, was a largely successful affair which took place between April 27th and October 29th. The fair was visited by 50.1 million from across Canada and the world (Benedict 1983: 31) while journalists praised Expo ‘67 for its modern architecture and thought-provoking exhibits on the progress of man (Fulford 1987: M11). The narrative of modernity and progression is discussed by André Jansson in his article, ‘Encapsulations: The Production of a Future Gaze at Montreal’s Expo 67’ (2007). According to Jansson, the built landscape of the Expo ‘67 site, accompanied by the city’s skyline, was “the manifestation of Montreal’s aspiration to become a world metropolis” (2007: 419). He believes that “the island location of Expo ‘67 enabled a new way of seeing Montreal” in line with Drapeau’s ‘world-class’ city aspirations (Jansson 2007: 424). A ‘future gaze’ was produced by “immersing its visitors in a texture of futurity” by creating a utopian island site infused with futuristic exhibits, technology and a modern transit system which enabled visitors to see the modern Montreal from a unique perspective (Jansson 2007: 426-427).

Erin Hurley also discusses how the purpose-built island environment of Expo ‘67 reflected a new image of Montreal and Quebec in her study, *National Performance: Representing Quebec from Expo 67 to Céline Dion* (2011). Hurley explains how “the constructed site gave geographical expression to an already circulating metaphor used to represent Quebec’s nation-ness” (2011: 35). In other words, the islands of Expo ‘67 were synecdochal of a “French Quebec floating in the sea of English speaking North America”

(Hurley 2011: 35) and a process which transformed Quebec into a “nation-state” in its own right (Hurley 2011: 32). Furthermore, the physical distance between the Quebec pavilion and the Canadian pavilion was a metaphor for “an increasingly urgent Quebecois national project” which symbolically promoted Quebec to nation-state status (Hurley 2011: 3; 35).

Overall, the Quebec pavilion, and Expo ‘67 more generally, emphasised how the province was increasingly becoming a political nation distinct from the rest of Canada (Hurley 2011: 37). This was central to the narrative of Quebec as an emerging modern nation-state. Hurley argues that Expo ‘67 was an “experiment in converting pays, a natural territory, into nation, a social organization” (2011: 37) which emphasised Quebec’s growing modernity. Like Jansson, Hurley explains how “Expo ‘67 was steeped in the ideology of modernity” with its theme ‘Man and His World’, innovative transport and the view of Montreal’s skyline that passengers observed as they travelled around the site (2011: 41). This narrative of modernity was integral to the story of Quebec which was presented at its pavilion.

Hurley discusses how the Quebec pavilion “immersed visitors in a thrilling experience of modernity and technological innovation à la québécoise [sic]” (2011: 5). In her description of the pavilion, Hurley quoting Pauline Curien (2003), outlines how:

The Pavilion program informs the visitor that the exhibit ‘consist(s) of three stages which illustrate in succession: 1. the natural milieu of Quebec and the challenge it presents to man; 2. man’s fight against this natural environment; 3. society and its aspirations: as people drive toward the future’ (2011: 48)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For a full account of the layout, content and features of the Quebec Pavilion see Hurley 2011: 47-50 or for French speakers see Curien 2003. *L'identité nationale exposée. Représentations du Québec à l'Exposition universelle de Montréal 1967 (Expo 67).* Unpublished doctoral thesis, Université Laval.

Hurley describes how these three stages signalled “the increasing complexity of Québécois society” which along with the overall staging of Expo ‘67, were illustrative of “Quebec’s maturity” (2011: 48). To summarise, “the Quebec Pavilion cultivated a dynamic environment, indicating Quebec’s vibrancy, youth, and momentum” which, as its official guidebook explained, presented a modern Quebec that had been “created following a difficult struggle against an immense and wild territory” (Hurley 2011: 49).

Hurley also contends that the theme of modernity was juxtaposed to the 235 warm, welcoming and glamorous hostesses that guided visitors around the fair (2011: 50). She sketches how their multi-faceted role included providing information, posing for photographs with visitors, and maintaining an attitude that was “polite, kind, patient” and produced a “welcoming and warm environment for their ‘guests’” (2011: 54). Furthermore, they were meant to be symbolic “of all that was exciting, vibrant, young and attractive about the fair” whilst also displaying a “warm, feminine element to the ‘cool’ modernity of the fair-city” (Hurley 2011: 53; 57).

This hostess role could be compared to the official welcoming role that Canada’s Aboriginal people played in the 2010 Olympic opening ceremony. Like the Expo ‘67 hostesses, the Aboriginal performers helped produce a warm and friendly atmosphere whilst engaging the audience with their vibrant cultural display. In both instances the hostesses were deliberately chosen to suit the theme of the event. While the warm demeanour of the Expo ‘67 hostesses contrasted with the cool, modernity emphasised through the purpose built site, their Quebec identity helped reinforce the theme of embracing Quebec’s new found modernity. In the case of the 2010 Olympics, the Aboriginal performers were used to dramatise and represent the larger hosting role given to the FHFN by VANOC.

Overall, Hurley's argument about Expo '67 is positioned within a larger task that investigates theatrical and cultural performances of Quebec that is not particularly relevant here. However, Hurley's insight into how Expo '67 was used to project multiple narratives about Quebec is useful to my study of the representation of Canada at the 2010 Olympics. What is missing in Hurley's study that would be useful, however, is some exploration into how Anglo-Canadian audiences responded to the Quebec pavilion.

David Anderson and Viviane Gosselin begin to analyse the Anglo-Canadian response in their study, 'Private and Public Memories of Expo '67: A Case Study of Recollections of Montreal's World's Fair, 40 Years After the Event' (2008). Anderson and Gosselin's discussion is based on a retrospective investigation into the visitor experience of 50 participants (2008: 3).<sup>6</sup> One of the areas they discuss is the national and regional narratives about Expo '67 gleaned from their questionnaire results. According to Anderson and Gosselin, there was "a clear appropriation of the same event by two different collectives, for two different popular narratives" (2008: 14). When asked the question, "What do you think was the significance of Expo '67 for Quebec and Canada?" the responses differed between Francophone and Anglophone participants (Anderson and Gosselin 2008: 11). While all Francophone visitors associated Expo '67 as a coming of age for Quebec, their Anglophone counterparts described the event as a Canadian achievement (Anderson and Gosselin 2008: 12). Anglophone participants also referred to the negative tensions present between Quebec and Canada which were not alluded to by Francophone participants (Anderson and Gosselin 2008: 11).

Thus, Anderson and Gosselin argue that there were two competing narratives about nationhood at Expo '67. While the Francophone narrative described Expo '67 as a "pivotal

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<sup>6</sup> Half were from B.C., half from Quebec and were Canadian born Caucasian with the exception of one Aboriginal woman, one African-American woman and three Caucasians who had recently moved to Canada at the time of the fair.

moment where Quebec stopped feeling secluded and non-modern,” the Anglophone narrative positioned Expo ‘67 as “the last great achievement before Canada became challenged by Quebec’s efforts to define itself as culturally different from the rest of Canada” (Anderson and Gosselin 2008: 14). Anderson and Gosselin conclude that these two narratives show how host cities and their visitors “appropriate cultural events to legitimize their identity” (2008: 16).

Overall, Anderson and Gosselin’s article is useful for its discussion of the competing narratives at Expo ‘67. While Jansson and Hurley focus on the regional narrative of Quebec at mega-events, Anderson and Gosselin have discussed how mega-events divide different communities along national lines. At Expo ‘67 they argue that the host narrative was dependent upon the geographical and linguistic identity of the fair visitors. Their survey results also illustrate that it was only the Anglophone participants who recognised the growing tensions between Canada and Quebec in the 1960s while the Francophone respondents appeared to ignore them. However, Anderson and Gosselin offer little context of the tensions between Anglo-Canada and Quebec during the 1960s which makes it difficult to comment on the implications of such narratives.

Unlike Anderson and Gosselin, Bruce Kidd does attempt to contextualise the 1976 Olympics within the political and cultural tensions between Canada and Quebec in his article, ‘The Culture Wars of the Montreal Olympics’ (1992). The 1976 Olympics have been celebrated as an event that increased Canadian pride and brought Canadians closer together. Journalist James Christie remembers how it “forever changed the face of Canadian sport and brought unprecedented attention and glamour to the city” (2001: S2). Meanwhile, Kidd fondly recollects how the Olympics “rekindled the spirit of a united country last felt with enthusiasm during the centennial of 1967” (1992:158). Nevertheless, the event is also remembered for its

huge debt of \$1.5 billion which was not repaid until 2006 (*Toronto Star* 2010: A04).

According to Kidd, the 1976 Olympics “remain a symbol of extravagant mismanagement and unfilled expectations” and to many Canadians were “an embarrassing failure” (1992: 152; 151). He also argues that the event’s failings “were magnified by the clash of nationalisms which preoccupied and polarized Canadian society” at the time (1992: 153). Kidd supports this theory by analysing the Olympics through a cultural lens. Kidd argues that “through their power of symbolic representation,” the Olympics have the ability to “help forge cultural identity and a sense of community” (1992: 153). Congruently, the Olympics are also “sites of cultural struggle, where different groups with widely varying abilities are content to impose the meanings they prefer” (Kidd 1992: 153). Kidd believes that this occurred at the 1976 Olympics.

He begins his discussion by providing a background of the 1976 Olympic bidding process. Kidd emphasises that Montreal’s Olympic aspirations were “hampered by doubt and opposition from the start” as those behind the bid battled for federal government support and funding against strong competition from Vancouver’s 1976 Winter Olympic bid (1992: 154). Fortunately for Montreal, the federal government was ultimately swayed in its direction due to the growing political and social tensions in Canada during the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, faced with increasing protest by Quebecois revolutionaries, the federal government approved Montreal’s bid but refused to offer any significant funding (Kidd 1992: 154). The debate surrounding who should bid for the 1976 Olympics “contributed to a costly delay in organisation and construction” and tensions continued to disrupt Games preparation, as well as its cultural programme (Kidd 1992: 155).

The cultural programme was a low priority for an organising committee that was transfixed with high-performance sport. Kidd informs us that the organisation and funding of

the 1976 Olympic cultural programme was left to “a small group of English-Canadian athletes and artists, the federal and other provincial governments” (1992: 157). He believes that this lack of interest and funding led to ‘safe’ representations of Canadian culture which, instead of neutralising tensions between French Canada and English Canada, only exacerbated them. For example, the federal government insisted that a series of Olympic posters bore the heading “Canada” rather than “Montreal” while “a streetscape of sculptures and drawings by a collective of twelve artists” were abruptly taken down by the City of Montreal (Kidd 1992: 157). Efforts to initiate an educational programme were also unsuccessful. Kidd points out that the 1976 Olympics’ international youth camp was poorly publicised while there was no official Olympic education programmes in Canadian schools which led to many teachers implementing their own (1992: 157).

Despite these problems, Kidd describes that the 1976 Olympics were still “a joyous 15 days of breath-taking performances and moving personal encounters” that for a brief moment negated the political and cultural tensions of a particularly turbulent time in Canadian history (1992: 158). He also argues that the national broadcasts of Team Canada’s achievements helped validate “both Quebec and pan-Canadian nationalism” (1992: 158). However, the 1976 Olympic Organising Committee was ultimately unsuccessful in any attempt to “unblock the dominant cultural rigidities” that were present in Canadian and Quebec society at the time (Kidd 1992: 159). Also, Kidd believes that the tensions between Canada and Quebec escalated dramatically in the years that followed (1992: 159).

Overall, Kidd’s article is useful for providing an economic, political and cultural background to the 1976 Olympics which is too often omitted from Olympic research. His acknowledgment of the political and cultural tensions that existed in Montreal and Canada in 1976 is relevant to my discussion of the tensions present in the Canadian narratives at the

2010 Olympics. While Kidd concentrates on the conflicting interests of French-Canada and English-Canada, my thesis focuses on the resistance VANOC faced from the Downtown Eastside area of Vancouver (DTES) and the opposition from West-Coast Aboriginal and Inuit people over the misrepresentation and appropriation of their cultures. Furthermore, like Kidd's article I also attempt to analyse the cultural programme. While Kidd's discussion on the cultural aspects planned by the Games organisers is fairly brief, I hope to investigate them in more detail in my study of the 2010 Olympics. I believe that by analysing these cultural or 'artistic' elements of the Olympic Games we can better investigate host narratives and how the values of the host nation are promoted.

Another relevant narrative to my study centres around the participation of Canadians and host city residents. This narrative was particularly present at the 1988 Calgary Olympics and is discussed by Harry Hiller (1990) and Kevin Wamsley and Michael Heine (1996). The city of Calgary, in the province of Alberta, was referred to by Gerald Friesen as the "city of the moment in western Canada" when he wrote *The West: Regional Ambitions, National Debates, Global Age* (1999: 86). Friesen described Alberta as a rich province due to its oil, coal and gas reserves and "a magnet for the young" due to the proximity of recreational areas like Banff National Park (Friesen 1999: 86).

He also pointed out that Alberta has the second highest concentration of corporate head offices in Canada after Toronto. Indeed, Alberta's population more than doubled between 1961 and 1981 as migrants were attracted by employment opportunities and a booming energy market (Friesen 1999: 86). However, this was soon followed by a period of recession in Alberta between 1981 and 1987 (Friesen 1999: 86). Hiller outlines how a drop in energy prices led to "a collapse in the housing market, declines in income and property values, and significant numbers of layoffs and bankruptcies" (1990: 124). Thus, the



preparations for hosting the 1988 Olympics took place during a period of economic difficulty. Despite this, Hiller argues that the Olympics actually helped to generate “a mood of optimism and expectation amid the discouragement” of the period (1990: 125). In the build up to the 1988 Olympics a feeling of anticipation swelled within Calgary as the event was promoted in schools and the local media. According to Hiller, by the time the Games opened on February 13th the majority of Calgary’s population were eagerly looking forward to taking their position on the global stage (1990: 125-6).

Overall, the 1988 Olympics were a huge economic success with a profit in excess of \$130 million (Whitson 2004: 1225) and the employment of over 9,000 Calgarians as enthusiastic volunteers (Wamsley and Heine 1996: 82). A post-Games survey revealed that 95 per cent of those polled were satisfied with the overall Olympic experience, while 83.3 per cent were in agreement that the benefits from hosting superseded the negatives (Hiller 1990: 123). Most significantly for nostalgic Albertans the event is fondly remembered for its impact on civic pride. Hiller agrees with this assessment of the 1988 Olympics by arguing that through an “interactive process involving urban residents” an elitist Olympic event “became a more populist urban festival” (1990: 118). Hiller discusses the various ways that this transformation took place in his article, ‘The Urban Transformation of a Hallmark Event: The 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics’ (1990). His first examples centre around the preparation for the 1988 Olympics.

Hiller explains how school children were thoroughly educated on Olympic matters and were taken on tours of the venues as well as “encouraged to draw pictures of Olympic activities” that were displayed across the city (Hiller 1990: 125). Elsewhere, newspaper coverage was provided daily during the 1988 Olympic torch relay (Hiller 1990: 125). Hiller also talks about the happy and excited crowds at the Olympic Plaza in Downtown Calgary

during the event (1990: 127).

The crux of Hiller's argument maintains that the civic pride felt at the 1988 Olympics existed because organisers maximised the opportunity for public participation thereby making it a populist event rather than an elite one (1990: 133). Wamsley and Heine also focus on the narrative of participation and civic pride at the 1988 Olympics in their article, 'Tradition, Modernity and the Construction of Civic Identity: The Calgary Olympics' (1996). They argue that Calgarians were persuaded to adopt a civic identity through educational initiatives such as "Olympic Education Resource Kits" which were given to 13,500 elementary schools to encourage children "to be excited about the Games" (Wamsley and Heine 1996: 87). This was combined with a volunteer programme which instructed their volunteers to display Calgary's famous hospitality and "true western warmth" (Wamsley and Heine 1996: 85).

Wamsley and Heine conclude that the formation of a civic identity at Calgary was a product of direct intervention and manipulation by the local government and Olympic organisers who sought to create a "festival atmosphere" and remind Calgarians of the benefits of hosting (Wamsley and Heine 1996: 86). The result was an eager public who welcomed the 1988 Olympics with open arms and were sad to see them leave (Wamsley and Heine 1996: 81). The Winter Olympics would not return to Canada, however, for another 22 years with the 2010 Vancouver and Whistler Games.

Canadian society has changed considerably since the 1988 Olympics. Regional politics continued to dominate the scene with the proposed Meech Lake Accord in 1990, the Charlottetown Accord in 1992 and the Quebec Referendum in 1995. All of these centred around establishing Quebec as a distinct society within Canada whilst expanding the powers of all Canadian provincial governments. Only the Charlottetown Accord, however, was put to a national vote with 55 per cent voting against the idea of Quebec separating (Clarke and

Kornberg 1994: 944). Interestingly, B.C. voters were amongst the highest in the country to vote 'No' with 68.3 per cent voting as such (Rocher 2014: 36).

Indeed, since the 1980s, B.C. has created stronger ties within the Pacific Rim economy while Vancouver has regularly been voted by *The Economist* as 'one of the best cities to live in the world' (2011). According to Jean Barman, "In 1972 the province was a conservative backwater" but "by 1995 the world, rather than Canada, had become B.C.'s stage" (2001: 322). Barman goes further to say that "The more British Columbians looked towards the Pacific Rim, the more the rest of Canada receded into irrelevance" (2001: 351). According to bid organisers, hosting the 2010 Olympics would provide B.C. with the opportunity to maximise the province's exposure (VBC 2002b). Interestingly, this type of regional narrative was not particularly present once Vancouver was awarded the 2010 Olympics. One of the narratives I believe was present celebrated Canada's Aboriginal heritage.

Several debates and incidents have been at the forefront of this relationship since the 1988 Calgary Olympics. The political relationship between Canada's Aboriginal population and the Canadian government has been particularly fraught. Attempts to recognise Aboriginal self-government, alongside debates about Quebec separatism, have largely failed. The Meech Lake Accord in 1990 failed due to Indigenous Manitoban Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Elijah Harper's refusal to endorse the Accord on grounds that Aboriginal rights could not be guaranteed, while the Charlottetown Accord, which promised to recognise the principle of Aboriginal self-government, was also rejected by Harper (Galloway 2013: A12). Another effort to make amends for past injustices against the Aboriginal population were seen in the two federal government apologies in 1998 and 2008 for the state's past residential school policy. Alongside these political attempts at reconciliation were a series of

altercations between the Canadian state and Aboriginal communities. Three of the most significant were Oka, Ipperwash and Gustafsen. These are just some of the developments in the state's relationship with Aboriginal people in the period between the 1988 and 2010 Olympics. The narrative of embracing Canada's Aboriginal heritage has previously been analysed by other scholars in reference to Canadian mega-events and the rest of the chapter reviews some of this literature.

### **Promoting Canada's Aboriginal Heritage at Mega-Events**

There are three popular narratives that are explored by researchers in their investigations into the representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage at Canadian mega-events. Firstly, researchers have analysed how the representation of Aboriginal culture and society has been produced by non-Aboriginal Canadians. Secondly, the positive and negative reactions from Aboriginal people have also been investigated by researchers who analysed how their culture had been appropriated and misrepresented by organising committees. Thirdly, some have discussed the active participation of Aboriginal groups and their relationship with organising committees in the construction of these representations. This literature review discusses the most recent articles in reference to these three themes.

The first article I wish to discuss is Myra Rutherdale and J.R Miller's study, 'It's Our Country: First Nations Participation in the Indian Pavilion at Expo '67' (2006). Rutherdale and Miller argue that the Indian pavilion "was unique in its assertion of the portrayal of Native/Newcomer relations" (2006: 148). The first part of their article discusses the fraught relationship between Aboriginal planners and non-Aboriginal organisers in the creation of the Indian pavilion which took place amidst a background of slow change in Canadian-Aboriginal

affairs. Rutherford and Miller explain how in the 1950s and early 1960s the federal government implemented “a widespread system of welfare on reserves” and commissioned an official enquiry into the social and economic lifestyle of Aboriginal people known as the Hawthorn Commission (1966) (2006: 155). Alongside this context, the federal government, represented by the Indian Affairs Branch (IAB), worked hard to present “a positive image of its policies and results” in their narrative of Aboriginal culture and society in the Indian pavilion (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 156).

The IAB’s planning for the Indian pavilion, however, involved a number of contentious ideas. Firstly, the IAB’s ideas for the pavilion were not well received by Expo ‘67’s Indian Advisory Committee (IAC) who objected to its simplistic design and had little to say when asked to offer their opinion (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 157). This tension was magnified in the plans to commission an Aboriginal artist to design a totem pole for the pavilion’s entrance. According to Rutherford and Miller, the IAB dealt with the totem pole project in a clumsy and insensitive manner when they chose Bill Reid as the totem pole artist without consulting the IAC (2006: 157). While the IAB later sought to gain approval from key member George Manuel, he insisted that a range of Aboriginal artists should have been consulted to submit proposals. Meanwhile, Reid vehemently criticised the IAB for attempting to create a generic pole which disregarded the wide variety of designs and symbolic meanings that could be found across First Nations bands (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 157).

Despite these mishaps, Rutherford and Miller argue that it is “inaccurate and unfair to suggest that the federal government’s approach to Expo ‘67 was completely insensitive to Aboriginal people” (2006: 157). Indeed, the pavilion was significant for its cooperation with the IAC in the production of an exhibit inside the pavilion. The major aim of the exhibit was to produce an Aboriginal narrative that “reflected Canadian Indian’s perceptions and

messages” (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 160). The result was a narrative that “balanced the theme of Indians joining the mainstream with assertions of First Nations’ pride, grievance, and entitlement” (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 160).

The exhibit’s subjects included the first encounters between Aboriginal people and European explorers, their relationship with missionaries and the education of Aboriginal children in residential schools. Despite the “sometimes discordant notes” Rutherford and Miller maintain that the pavillion’s “final message was surprisingly pacific and non-confrontational” (2006: 164). In the pavilion’s final display, visitors were invited to sit around an “imitation fire” and “contemplate the future of the Indians of Canada” (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 164).<sup>7</sup> Overall, Rutherford and Miller believe the Indian pavilion was unusual because of its “ambivalent blend of traditional culture” which addressed the Aboriginal community’s “modern adaptation to a world dominated by other cultural groups” (2006: 154).

The second part of Rutherford and Miller’s article discusses the variety of responses from the Indian pavilion’s three million visitors which ranged from pride, shame, anger and surprise (2006: 165). They provide various examples including school children from Frobisher Bay, American-Canadian Aboriginal singer Buffy Sainte-Marie and the director of the National Congress of American Indians, John Belindo (2006: 166). They conclude that there was a lack of surprise amongst Aboriginal visitors regarding what they saw in the exhibits. While many wished that the pavilion had narrated their story “more aggressively,” others reiterated their belief that the pavilion had the ability to shock the Canadian public (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 166). This latter viewpoint was held by one of the pavilion’s public relations officers Russell Moses from the Six Nations Delaware.

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<sup>7</sup> For the full text of a the message provided see Rutherford and Miller 2006: 164.

Moses' opinion was outlined in an article by *Montreal Star* journalist John Gray. In it, he explained how Moses felt the pavilion "was the first time that Canada's Indians have had the chance to express their true feelings" (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 167). According to Rutherford and Miller, the Indian pavilion was also one of the first instances that the "traditional portrayal of First Nations in these kinds of public displays was being challenged" (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 167). Reaction to the Indian pavilion from the press recognised the "brutal frankness" and "bitter commentary" of the Aboriginal narrative in Canadian history (Rutherford and Miller 2006: 167). The IAB was also celebrated for enabling "the Indians to tell their own story in their own way" (Malkin in Rutherford and Miller 2006: 167).

Overall, Rutherford and Miller emphasise that whilst the pavilion "caused a great sensation," it also produced a feeling of cooperation between the Canadian government and the Aboriginal organisers which addressed the impact of colonisation on Native children, adults and communities" (2006: 168-9). They argue that the event was unique for how it allowed Canadian Aboriginal people some access to the representation of their history and lifestyle at a high-profile event usually exclusively controlled by non-Aboriginals. While Rutherford and Miller agree that this led to a thought-provoking exhibit, which addressed the negative aspects of Aboriginal treatment by non-Aboriginals, they also argue that the planning and design was fraught with disagreement between the government advisory committee and the Aboriginal representatives. According to Rutherford and Miller, the IAB still managed to insert their own preferred representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage alongside the narrative championed by the Aboriginal representatives. They achieved this through the use of popular cultural symbols such as totem poles, nominating the IAC members and by injecting a more positive tone into the pavilion's exhibits (Rutherford and Miller 2006). Furthermore, they conclude that the beneficial impact of Aboriginal representation at Expo '67 was short-

lived (2006: 172-173). In their conclusion, Rutherford and Miller explain that tensions between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal representations of culture continued to surface after Expo '67. One example they refer to is the Oka Crisis of 1990. They argue that incidents such as Oka are evidence that the intercultural exchange in Canada's Aboriginal narrative seen at Expo '67 had only had a small, brief impact.

Unlike Rutherford and Miller, my dissertation is not really a study into the nature of the relationship between 2010 Olympic organisers and Aboriginal people. Instead, I focus on the narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage along the lines of Rutherford and Miller's analysis of the Indian pavilion. While the nature of Expos is centred around educational pavilions like the Indian pavilion in 1967, the Olympics are quite different. Even though there would have been pavilions at the 2010 Olympics, they were not the main attraction of the event. The main focus was on the two weeks of winter sport but also on how Canada was represented through the 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

The Indian pavilion at Expo '67, however, provides an interesting contrast to VANOC's narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage at the 2010 Olympics. At the 2010 Olympics the Aboriginal narrative ignored Canada's past oppressive treatment of its Aboriginal population, while Expo '67's Indian Pavilion highlighted it. This is quite shocking when you consider the changes in Canadian society's attitudes and treatment of Aboriginal people since 1967. This helps to reinforce Rutherford and Miller's conclusion that the impact of Expo '67's Indian pavilion was short-lived. My study aims to interrogate how the Aboriginal narrative at the 2010 Olympics emphasised Canadian values of tolerance and diversity whilst ignoring its troubled past.

Jennifer Adese discusses similar issues in her study; 'Colluding with the enemy? Nationalism and Depictions of 'Aboriginality' in Canadian Olympic movements' (2012).



Adese argues that “Canada has consistently drawn on the multicultural rhetoric (of equality) as a framework for narrating Canadian-Indigenous relations” (2012: 380). She describes how Aboriginal culture and history has been used to market “Canada’s uniqueness and diversity” in order to compete in a growing, competitive global environment (2012: 481). Adese also criticises the Canadian government for how it has “sought to repackage the nation’s image” by producing an Aboriginal narrative that actively ignored the historical oppressive treatment of Canada’s Aboriginal population (2012: 481). Adese supports her argument by discussing the Aboriginal narratives at the 1976, 1988 and the 2010 Olympics.

Adese begins her argument by introducing the concept of nation branding which involves countries and/or cities “transforming national narratives” to “present distinctive images in order to attract foreign investment and skilled labour” (Adese 2012: 481). According to Adese, hosting the Olympics is an example of how this brand state has been constructed and believes that the opening and closing ceremonies are a “space for countries to brand themselves” through “pageantry and spectacle” (2012: 482). In Adese’s article the brand, or narrative, of Canada has “hinged on the idea that Canada (and its people by extension) is a ‘civil nation characterised by benevolence, tolerance and social politeness’” (2012: 483). Adese argues that this narrative of social harmony between Aboriginal people and the rest of Canada is emphasised at Olympic ceremonies despite it being a “past and a present the nation has never had” (2012: 485).

Adese first describes how the 1976 Olympic closing ceremony was an opportunity for the Canadian government “to establish itself in the eyes of the world and to showcase multiculturalism and the nation’s perception of its own moral superiority” (2012: 486). However, Adese explains that the presentation of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage was “replete with racist representations of imaginary Indians” (2012: 487). Unlike the Indian pavilion at

Expo '67, no consultation occurred with any Aboriginal representatives over their portrayal in the 1976 closing ceremony. As a result, Canada's Aboriginal people were positioned within a paradigm of the 'noble savage' (Adese 2012: 485).

At the 1988 Olympic opening ceremony Adese illustrates how a group of Treaty Seven Aboriginals were instructed to enter the arena "on horseback while wearing feathered headdress, buckskin clothing, and face paint" alongside Cowboys and Mounties (Adese 2012: 489). Later on in the ceremony, Aboriginal performers sang and played drums while awaiting the arrival of the Olympic flame, followed by Yukon performer Daniel Tlen's performance of 'O Canada' sung in his native Southern Tutchane language (Adese 2012: 490). Adese believes that the main purpose of this opening ceremony was to highlight the narrative of social harmony. The passive, 'noble savage' representation of Aboriginal people in the ceremony was sharpened by the presence of Mounties who ensured that "a new (European) society replaced the old (Indigenous peoples) with as little upset as possible" (Adese 2012: 490).

Adese argues that the 2010 Olympic opening ceremony continued to promote a narrative that emphasised the benevolent relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginals (2012: 493). Adese explains how after the Aboriginal welcome, "obvious markers of Aboriginality and Aboriginal distinctiveness disappeared and were replaced by simulations that referenced a pan-Canadian landscape" (2012: 496). She also comments on the absence of Aboriginal people throughout the rest of the ceremony. In conclusion, Adese argues that the Aboriginal narrative at the 2010 opening ceremony allowed Canada "to continue marketing its multicultural national identity" by "denying the ongoing and real impacts of colonialism on Indigenous peoples' lives" (2012: 496-497). Adese's analysis of Aboriginal representation at Canadian Olympic ceremonies is clearly very different to

Rutherford and Miller. While the latter argue that the Indian Pavilion allowed Aboriginal people to represent their troubled, and sometimes oppressive history, Adese believes that the 1976, 1988 and 2010 Olympics did not.

Adese argues that the main motivation for endorsing this narrative of social harmony was to promote a positive image of Canada to an international audience. Like Adese, I too argue that VANOC portrayed the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadian relationship as one of equal partnership and used it to 'sell' Canada on the global stage. While the FHFN were recognised as official hosts, some efforts were made to incorporate Aboriginal people and imagery into the brand identity of the 2010 Olympics. However, I also believe that VANOC produced a narrative that relied upon stereotypical Aboriginal cultural symbols that would market Canada uniquely in front of an international audience and attract tourism. This involved the appropriation and misrepresentation of Aboriginal culture and society as well as minimal physical appearance of Canadian Aboriginal people. This theme of social harmony also helped to positively reinforce Canada's shared tolerance of their diverse cultures in front of a national audience. My study will attempt a deeper analysis of the images and rhetoric surrounding Aboriginal narratives at the 2010 Olympics. I will do this by interpreting the meanings behind the Aboriginal cultural symbols used by VANOC to illustrate how they misrepresented or appropriated Aboriginal culture in favour of emphasising supposed Canadian values of tolerance and diversity.

One of the features I focus on is the 2010 Olympic logo, which is also discussed by Christine O'Bonsawin in her article, 'The Conundrum of Ilanaaq: First Nations Representation and the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics' (2006). The point of this investigation, according to O'Bonsawin, "is to critically assess the employment of political persuasive visual imagery that has been outside, and at times in opposition to, the FHFN

Protocol Agreement” (2006: 357). This FHFN Protocol agreement cemented the official hosting partnership between VANOC and the four First Nations bands on whose traditional lands the games took place. O’Bonsawin explains that the Protocol Agreement, combined with VANOC’s recognition of the importance of First Nations support, made its choice of the “highly offensive” Ilanaaq logo confusing (2006: 388). O’Bonsawin explains that the logo was criticised for lacking relevance to West Coast Aboriginal culture and appropriating an Inuit cultural symbol.

The logo was further criticised when it was unveiled at the Turin handover ceremony which, O’Bonsawin explains, was full of scenes which appropriated and misrepresented Inuit and FHFN culture respectively (2006: 390). While CTV commentators rudely spoke over Canadian coverage of the FHFN welcome, the medallion given out to the crowd “incorporated a symbol that had recently been declared a deliberate act of assault on the sovereignty of the Northwest Coast by a Hereditary Chief of his own nation” (O’Bonsawin 2006: 390-391). The final straw was the construction of the 2010 Olympic logo by non-Aboriginal Canadian professional dancers (O’Bonsawin 2006: 391).

Despite identifying that the inclusion of FHFN was a “positive initiative,” O’Bonsawin asserts that VANOC proved “to be unrelenting in its controversial adoption of a foreign symbol that has proven to be both geographically irrelevant and culturally offensive to the FHFN as well as the Inuit populations of Canada’s northern regions” (2006: 391-392). While VANOC misrepresented its FHFN partners, they appropriated Inuit culture for their own purposes and in essence entombed it “within a glass cabinet” (O’Bonsawin 2006: 392). Overall, O’Bonsawin’s research introduced me to the commentary surrounding Aboriginal representation at the 2010 Olympics which I was then able to investigate further in my own research.

All of the literature I have discussed here emphasises how Canada's Aboriginal heritage has been used by organising committees as part of their imaging strategies to promote a harmonious narrative with typically associated Canadian values of tolerance and diversity. While Adese and O'Bonsawin have focused on how organising committees appropriate and misrepresent Aboriginal culture, Rutherford and Miller have explored how Canadian Aboriginal people have been invited to co-produce representations of their culture and history. In my study, I want to analyse the images of Aboriginal culture and society more closely than the authors discussed here, with the exception of O'Bonsawin whose study provides an in-depth analysis that situates Aboriginal representation within the larger context of cultural meanings. O'Bonsawin's article is a more detailed and insightful study that better contextualises Aboriginal representation within the history, culture and society of Canada's Aboriginal heritage. While Adese does illustrate how Canadian Aboriginal heritage was represented in all three Olympics, her discussion of the 2010 opening ceremony is brief. My study aims to analyse the deeper meanings that can be interpreted from VANOC's images, like O'Bonsawin does in her analysis of the Turin handover ceremony.

Even though this literature review was a difficult task to perform, because of the limited amount of research available on Canadian mega-events and the 2010 Olympics, the studies discussed here have been essential to my own research. While some articles have helped to provide a background into the past representations of Canada at mega-events, others have introduced useful approaches. The main approach that my study takes is to take a closer look at VANOC's images in their brand identity and marketing campaign. I argue that the images helped to construct the two narratives of Canada's passion for winter sport and its Aboriginal heritage which emphasised key Canadian values with the aim to attract tourism and boost public morale. I believe that this type of study has rarely been done in mega-event

research and in respect of Canadian case studies even fewer still. There is an abundance of images from the 2010 Olympic Games waiting to be analysed and evaluated whereas pursuing legacy measurement studies involves lengthy data collection. However, few researchers seem willing to undertake this task while the majority of 2010 Olympic researchers have discussed the event's tangible economic, social and environmental impacts (Eby 2007; Holden, MacKenzie and VanWynsberghe 2008; Ferguson et al. 2011).

I believe this is a missed opportunity to research how narratives of Olympic hosts are presented to the international and home audiences. By looking at these images in close correlation with media scans and historical, cultural and social knowledge about the host, we can interpret how the host organising committees purposefully portrayed city and/or country. What type of narratives about host and country were presented? How did the images used in their campaign support these narrations about the host and which host values are emphasised? Firstly, however, I will outline my methodology for this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO - METHODOLOGY**

### **Analysing Images Using Semiology**

According to Gillian Rose, “images have the ability to render the world in visual terms” and “display it in very particular ways” (2001: 6). Indeed, images saturate society and appear in a number of media ranging from television programmes, advertisements, movies, posters, websites, newspaper pictures, paintings, and many more besides, making images hard to ignore (Rose 2001: 6-7). Rose elucidates how images “can be powerful and seductive in their own right” and in many cases “offer very particular visions of social categories” such as class, gender, race and sexuality (2001: 11). One such researcher who places high importance on how images can inform us about these aspects of cultures and societies is Professor of English and Art History, W.J.T. Mitchell.

In his study, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (2005) Mitchell prioritises image analysis as an increasingly urgent task in studying societies and cultures. The aim of his study is to interrogate the images that surround us, with a particular focus on “how they communicate as signs and symbols” and “what sort of power they have to affect human emotions and behaviour (2005: 28). To do this, Mitchell considers images as “living organisms” (2005: 11) and prefers the question “what to images want?” over “what do images mean or do?” (2005: 9). Despite this focus on analysing the ‘life’ and content of images, Mitchell has been criticised for ignoring the context of images. According to Heather Collette-VanDeraa and Douglas Kellner, “he defocuses attention on the artist or artifactor, the art/artefact production apparatus, aesthetics, and audience reception or effects of the work” (2007: 168). Like Collette-VanDeraa and Kellner I too think it is important to consider the

images alongside these contextual factors. Significant factors of an image's context include its author or creator, its original purpose, where it belongs to, where it is displayed, and who it is distributed to (Rose 2001: 14).

This last example is particularly relevant to my analysis of the images in VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. Rose explains that some writers on visual culture "argue that what is important about images is not simply the image itself, but how it is seen by particular spectators who look in particular ways" (2001: 11-12). This is because our economic, social and cultural standing affects the way we view particular images. For example, within the context of my research, how a non-Aboriginal viewer interpreted the 2010 Olympic logo would have been different to how an Aboriginal viewer did, and furthermore there would have been a difference between how a member of a West Coast band looked at the logo, compared to an Inuk. Thus, it is pertinent to bear in mind the variety of different interpretations that can be gleaned from the same image when critically analysing them as a researcher. John Berger calls this "ways of seeing" (1972: 2) while Rose argues that "it is necessary to reflect on how you as a critic of visual images are looking" as well as considering possible audience interpretations (2001: 16).

Overall, there are three key points which Rose emphasises for critically analysing images. Firstly, we need to observe closely an image's content so we can best describe what is being shown. This involves looking at the image's composition, colours and themes to suggest what it is possibly informing us about the society or culture it seeks to represent. Secondly, it is advantageous to consider the production qualities of an image in order to ascertain its purpose and the potential effects on the audiences that consume them. This leads us to Rose's third point which accentuates the need to consider the multiple audiences of images and the various ways they interpret them.



Rose's study offers a variety of methods for analysing images in light of these three points including content analysis, discourse analysis and psychoanalysis (2001: 54-68; 135-186; 100-134). Integral to my analysis of VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, however, is the theory of semiology in image analysis. The concept of semiology is a notoriously elaborate theory characterised by excessive jargon often making it difficult to comprehend. For my study I wish to follow the most basic explanation of semiology to ensure that my image analysis is easy to understand to those not conversant in the theory.

The theory of semiology is believed to have originated from the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (Chandler 2007: 2). While both theorists differ in their approach to semiology their studies involved the analysis of the 'signs' and their 'signifiers' that were to be found in text. French writer Roland Barthes explored this theory in his collection of essays *Mythologies* (1957) where he discussed how various different myths can be found in the text and images of our cultures. Amongst the examples he analysed were wrestling, Romans in films, wine, and the exotic of *The Lost Continent*.

Barthes' most famous essay, 'Myth Today,' expanded upon the theory of myth that is the basis of the above examples. Like Saussure, Barthes believed that "any semiology postulates a relation between two terms, a signifier and a signified" (1957: 135). By employing Saussure's dual model, Barthes added another level to his semiological analysis which he called the sign, or in other words, "the associative total of the first two terms" (1957: 135). Barthes defined this as "a second-order semiological system" (1957: 137) and used it to analyse the concept of myth within text and images. According to Barthes, myth should be considered as "a system of communication" whereby "every object in the world can pass from

a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society” (1957: 131-132).

Barthes explains the presence of myth in one of his most famous case-studies - a *Paris Match* cover he notices during a trip to the barbers in the following passage:

On the cover, a young Negro in a French uniform is saluting with his eyes uplifted, probably fixed upon the fold of the tricolour. All of this is the *meaning* of the picture. But, whether naively or not, I see very well what it signifies to me: that France is a great Empire, that all of her sons, without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors. I am therefore again face with a greater semiological system: there is a signifier, itself already formed with a previous system (*a black soldier is giving the French salute*); there is a signified (it is here a purposeful mixture of Frenchness and militariness); finally, there is the presence of the signified through the signifier (1957: 139).

Clearly, the myth that Barthes concentrates on here revolves around the concept of the young Black soldier as a representative symbol of the encompassing nature of French imperialism.

Barthes elaborates on the function of myth and this *Paris Match* cover later on in his essay. He prescribes the terms “meaning” and “form” to the signifier of the French black soldier saluting and the myth that is French imperialism (1957: 140). He goes on to explain that:

The meaning will be for the form like the instantaneous reserve of history, a tamed richness, which it is possible to call and dismiss in a sort of rapid alternation: the form must constantly be able to be rooted again in the meaning and to get there what nature it needs for its nutriment; above all, it must be able to hide there. It is a constant game of hide-and-seek between the meaning and the form which defines myth (1957: 141-2).

Whilst this explanation for how myth functions is sometimes difficult to understand for a beginner to semiotics, it is clear that Barthes places great importance on the ability for myth to root itself as natural within an image. Barthes expands further on this:

The Negro who salutes is not the symbol of the French Empire: he has too much presence, he appears as a rich, fully experienced, spontaneous, innocent, indisputable image. But at the same time this presence is tamed, put at a distance, almost made transparent; it recedes a little, it becomes the accomplice of a concept which comes to it fully armed, French imperality (1957: 142)

One of the most important comments that Barthes makes regarding myth is that it “is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflexion” that “hides nothing” but instead “distorts” (1957: 153). According to Barthes, “everything happens as if the picture naturally conjured up the concept,” which in this case is French imperialism (1957: 154). Furthermore, “myth does not deny things” (Barthes 1957: 169) but instead “makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification which is not that of an explanation but that of a statement of fact” (Barthes 1957: 169-70).

The concept of myth and Barthes’ semiological system seemed most appropriate to my study of the romanticisation and mythologisation of Canadian narratives in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. By focusing on the presence of myth in images, like Barthes does in his essay, I attempt to explain how VANOC’s two narratives offer romanticised and mythologised representations of Canadian society, culture and values. By using the “full box of analytic tools” (Rose 2001: 69) that semiology offers, I could investigate how myths (including the myths of the North, hockey, ‘Vanishing Indian’ and ‘Performing Indian’) were hidden in plain sight within the images that VANOC used - much like the presence of French imperialism on the *Paris Match* cover. The benefit of using this approach is to realise how images operate within the larger context of the society or culture it seeks to represent. Furthermore, as “semiology is centrally concerned with the construction of social difference” (Rose 2001: 96) we can also investigate what images do not illustrate to us.

Overall, Barthes’ theory of semiological analysis helps us to comprehend the mythical, or ideological, meanings behind images. According to Rose, implementing this theory of mythological analysis “requires a broad understanding of a culture’s dynamics” (2001: 91). It is only when we are aware of a given culture’s dynamics and history that we can offer any interpretation of myth in images. I was keen to analyse the images, in light of

Barthes' theory, with my knowledge of Canadian society, culture and history that the two narratives attempted to represent. There are a number of questions that Rose suggests for performing semiological image analysis which I have applied in my study of VANOC's images. They include:

- What is being shown?
- What are the components of the image?
- How are they arranged?
- Where is the viewer's eye drawn to in the image and why?
- What use is made of colour?
- What do the different components of an image signify?
- What knowledges are being deployed?
- When was it made?
- Who made it?
- Why was it made?
- Where and how would it have been displayed originally?
- What are the relations between the maker, the owner and the subject?
- How is it circulated?
- Would the image have had written text to guide its interpretation? (Rose 2001: 188-190)

I used these questions to help interpret the images when researching VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

My own analysis of VANOC's images, and the two accompanying narratives, is not meant to be taken as the only possible interpretations. Indeed, Rose points out that it is remiss to claim that one can "delve beneath surface appearances to reveal the true meaning of images" (Rose 2001: 98). Instead, I have attempted to offer two suggestions about how Canada was represented by VANOC in employing the visual methodology outlined above. The images I analysed were taken from various different aspects of VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign which this chapter will now introduce.

### **VANOC's 2010 Olympic Brand Identity and Marketing Campaign**

There are several different features that composed the brand identity and marketing campaign of the 2010 Olympics. The sources I utilised ranged from the early years of the Vancouver Bid Corporation's (VBC) 2010 Olympic bid campaign up until the closing of the Games on February 28th, 2010. The two sources from the bid period which I used were a promotional video called *It's Our Time To Shine* (2003a) and the official bid books (2003b-d). The three volumes of the bid books were submitted to the IOC as part of the VBC's candidature file on January 10th, 2003 (Vancouver Sun 2003a: A22). The bid books primarily provided technical information regarding the 2010 Olympic bid and a brief economic, social and cultural background about Canada, B.C. and Vancouver alongside a plethora of images. The images showcased Canada's winter landscape, passion for winter sport, Vancouver's coastal-mountain location, and the country's diverse culture whilst the presence of Aboriginal people and culture was minimal.

Alongside the bid books was a video called *It's Our Time to Shine* which was created to promote the 2010 Olympic bid and Canada to the international and Canadian public. Like

in the bid books, images of winter sports dominated the video while the inclusion of Aboriginal people or culture was negligible. However, the theme of Canada's Aboriginal heritage became more prominent after Vancouver and Whistler were announced as the 2010 Olympic hosts on July 2nd, 2003 (Vancouver Sun 2003b: D19). There are several sources I consulted to analyse VANOC's two narratives of winter sport and Aboriginal heritage in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Firstly, the 2010 Olympic logo was one of the most integral to my analysis of VANOC's narrative which embraced Canada's Aboriginal heritage. According to Wei Yew, an Edmonton-based graphic designer, an Olympic logo is often "inspired by the host nation's heritage or by its sense of what the Olympics means to the nation" (Yew 2005: C1). The Olympic logo is usually a prominent symbol of the event as it features in television coverage, promotional material, and banners and posters at the Olympic venues. The 2010 Olympic logo was 'borrowed' from Inuit culture and featured an inuksuk, a traditional marker stone. The design was heavily criticised by some Aboriginal people and academic researchers who accused VANOC of appropriating and misrepresenting Aboriginal culture. Criticism surrounding the logo resurfaced after the handover ceremony at the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics.

The IOC describes the artistic segment of the handover ceremony as "an invitation to the youth of the world to attend the next Games" (2012: 2). Using the concept of "Come Play With Us" the short segment was seen by VANOC as "the first chapter in the story of Canada's Games" with the main priority being to reflect "Canada's playful celebration of Winter" (2006b: 4). This concept was played out in a montage which featured an ice fisherman, a hockey game and the construction of the 2010 Olympic logo accompanied by the singing of popular Canadian singer Avril Lavigne (VANOC 2006b: 5). The general

consensus, however, was that the ceremony was too safe and clichéd in its attempt to represent an ‘authentic’ picture of Canada. One *Vancouver Sun* reader described the ceremony as “a disaster” which “stereotyped Canada with the usual native dances and hockey” (2006: A19) while *The Province* criticised VANOC for presenting a “stilted, stereotypical view of Canada as a land of ice, snow and inukshuks [sic]” (2006: A18). Meanwhile, Premier and former Vancouver mayor Gordon Campbell believed the ceremony did not “speak to the ‘new Canada’” (Furlong 2011: 134).

Another dubious choice that VANOC made was its decision for the 2010 Olympic mascots which were also ‘borrowed’ from Aboriginal culture. One of the main attractions of mascots is their commercial profitability. Plush toys and souvenirs have been produced since the 1972 Munich Olympics when manufacturers paid approximately £110,000 for licences to sell products bearing the Olympic logo (Broadbent 2010: 4). According to Rick Broadbent, ever since Waldi the dachshund at the 1972 Munich Olympics, “the cute and the cuddly have become a licence to print money” (2010: 4). However, in recent years mascot sales have been unpredictable. At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, mascot sales failed to exceed targets (Broadbent 2010: 4) while the most recent Olympic mascots from London 2012 were blamed for the poor performance of their manufacturers Hornby (Ruddick 2012: 39). Like other Olympic organisers before them VANOC opted for cute and cuddly with their selection of the 2010 Olympic mascots.

Vancouver Sun journalist Shelly Fralic emphasised how the 2010 Olympic mascots were mostly expected to appeal to children and generate revenue through the sale of plush toys (2007: A11). The three mascots chosen by VANOC were based on mythical animals taken from West-Coast Aboriginal culture, and were called Miga the Sea Bear, Sumi the Thunderbird and Quatchi the Sasquatch. In addition, they were joined by a ‘sidekick’ called,



Mukmuk the Marmot. By October 2008 sales of the 2010 Olympic mascots and other associated merchandise had reached \$9.1 million (Penner 2008: A10) while 300,000 plush mascot toys had been sold by early 2009 (Inwood 2009: A33). According to VANOC's financial report from December 2010, the total 2010 Olympic merchandise revenue came to a staggering \$54.6 million (VANOC 2010: 4).

Two other features of VANOC's brand identity and marketing campaign were a series of posters and a video called *With Glowing Hearts*. Both contained images which contributed to VANOC's narrative about Canadian passion for winter sports. The posters were created by VANOC's design team, led by the late Leo Obstbaum, and featured illustrations of winter Olympians. Meanwhile, images of winter sport in the video *With Glowing Hearts* offered actual examples of Canadian Olympians as well as scenes of passionate spectators which were highly similar to those used in the bid video *It's Our Time To Shine*. Images showcasing Canada's Aboriginal heritage also briefly featured in the *With Glowing Hearts* video. VANOC continued to promote the two narratives of winter sport and Canada's Aboriginal heritage once the Games opened on the 12th February, 2010. The two sources I analysed from this period were the opening and closing ceremonies.

The nature of these opening and closing ceremonies has evolved since the rebirth of the modern Olympics in Athens in 1896. Games organisers have constantly sought "creative ways to combine Olympic protocol with just the right amount of entertainment, cultural references and technological innovations" in order to create "a unique and unforgettable festival" (IOC 2012: 1). According to Rivenburgh, the opening and closing ceremonies are "the primary venue for the Olympic host to present itself to the world" involving a "careful (and highly negotiated) selection of music, dance, graphics, costumes, and personalities designed to showcase the host culture and setting" (2004: 7). Hosts also use opening and

closing ceremonies as an opportunity for promoting national and regional narratives.

Jackie Hogan defines opening and closing ceremonies as “elaborately staged and commercialised narratives of nation” which sometimes serve as an “affirmation of national identity” (Hogan 2003: 102). Stuart Hall also described the ceremonies as a “narrative of nation” or a:

Set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and rituals which stand for or represent the shared experiences, sorrows and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to the nation (Hall 1992: 293).

Alan Tomlinson argues how “nationalistic displays and assertions of cultural distinctiveness” often “prioritise the local over the allegedly universal and the global” (1996: 600). Thus, while the event may “position the nation as a player on the global stage” the host’s “national and local history are the real stuff of affiliation and belongingness” (Tomlinson 1996: 600). VANOC emphasised the latter prominently in the 2010 opening and closing ceremonies.

The 2010 opening ceremony was attended by 60,000 people and viewed by an estimated three billion people worldwide (Canada 2010: 68). It was the first ceremony in Winter Olympic history to be held indoors and was dedicated to Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritshvili who had tragically died earlier that day in a test run accident. Despite this added solemnity to the evening’s proceedings, the ceremony proved to be a spectacular and flamboyant show. An estimated 4,500 performers were involved in creating a story about Canada, called ‘Landscape of a Dream,’ which was co-funded by VANOC and the Department of Canadian Heritage, costing a grand total of \$38 million (Baka 2010: 268). VANOC’s executive vice president of service operations and ceremonies Terry Wright

explained how the ceremonies were an opportunity “to tell a story about the region, people, and culture of Vancouver, Whistler, B.C. and Canada” (Griffin 2007: H14).

One of the main focal points of the opening ceremony was the Aboriginal welcome at the beginning of the evening which included representatives from the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) alongside members of other Aboriginal bands. It was their role to officially welcome the global audience and the athletes to the 2010 Winter Olympics by singing, dancing and playing the drums. Aboriginal cultural references also featured in other parts of the opening ceremony including the use of four welcome totem poles, mythical Aboriginal animal imagery and the appearance of the FHFN’s official logos.

Elsewhere, Canadian passion and participation in winter sport was also highlighted with acrobatic performers dressed as snowboarders, skaters and hockey players towards the end of the ‘Landscape of a Dream’ segment. This narrative also featured in images of Canada’s favourite past-time ice-hockey in the closing ceremony. Overall, both the ceremonies were, to some extent, a celebration of Canada’s relationship with winter sport and the nation’s Aboriginal heritage which both emphasised Canadian values of perseverance, adaptability, tolerance and diversity.

The images that I analysed as part of my study into the romanticised and mythologised narratives in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign were all taken from the above source material. By employing my set of questions from the visual methodology outlined earlier I was able to pursue a critical analysis of VANOC’s two narratives. However, simply analysing these images on their own was not enough to support my thesis. I also used archival and newspaper research to support my image analysis. The rest of this chapter discusses how I used these two sources to support my analysis of VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

## Supporting My Image Analysis

To support my thesis on how VANOC's images contributed to the narratives of winter sport and Aboriginal heritage I examined archival and official VANOC documents. My original aim was to research VANOC's records at the Vancouver City Archives (VCA) but these were still unavailable to the public at the time of writing this dissertation. Unfortunately, VANOC's records are not due to be released in the near future and confidentiality restrictions mean that some of the information will still not be accessible for at least another decade.<sup>8</sup> Instead, I relied upon the VBC records which had been entrusted to VCA when the organisation was dismantled in late 2003. These records consisted of documents that related to the bid including inter-group communication, feedback from the public, communication with the IOC and details of promotional events. The VBC records proved to be extremely useful for my research on their 2010 Olympic bid marketing campaign.

Prior to my visit I had already performed a search on the VCA online database to determine which records I wanted to look at and was thus able to commence my research immediately once I arrived. I spent a period of one week at VCA in late April 2012 with two main objectives in mind when looking at the VBC records. Firstly, I wanted to investigate the VBC's motives for submitting their bid to host the 2010 Olympics. I found several examples of the type of promotional literature that the VBC published which outlined the benefits that they expected to gain from hosting the 2010 Olympics.

For example, the VBC document *Why is Vancouver Bidding for the Right to Host the 2010 Winter Games* explained that \$10 billion of direct economic activity, 228,000 direct and indirect jobs, and \$2.5 billion in incremental tax revenue was to be expected (2002a). Other

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<sup>8</sup> Email conversation with a member of staff at the VCA in March 2013.

documents, such as their *Media Relations Policy*, highlighted how the VBC instructed their staff on responding to the media regarding the 2010 Olympic bid. These type of documents were not available on the internet unlike other widely published sources such as the Bid Books (2003b-d) and VANOC's *Information 2010: Your Guide to the 2010 Olympics* (2008).

Secondly, I wanted to research the negative reaction from the B.C. public towards the 2010 Olympic bid and the VBC's response in letter and email communication. Many examples of public correspondence lamented the pursuit of a costly event whilst many areas of B.C. were suffering from financial cutbacks. This information was useful when providing an economic background for how the VBC, and later VANOC, promoted the 2010 Olympics which is discussed in chapter three. I argue that in the face of this public opposition, VANOC disseminated romanticised and mythologised narratives in order to maximise other benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympics. Unfortunately, researching these narratives was difficult due to VANOC's records being closed to the public.

Instead, I had to look for VANOC documents using internet-based research. By employing this method I was able to obtain two documents in particular which provided me with information about key features of the 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. The first informative item was *Information 2010: Your Guide to the 2010 Olympics* (2008b). This document was produced by VANOC to provide the public with information regarding the 2010 Olympics. The sections that were most useful gave me an insight into VANOC's motives behind decisions like choosing the 2010 Olympic logo and the mascots. The second source I used was VANOC's document on the 2006 Turin handover ceremony which gave a step-by-step description of the programme and how it represented the host nation Canada. Despite the usefulness of these documents, they could not fully substitute the VANOC archives.

In order to help compensate this loss I also used John Furlong's retrospective Olympic memoir, *Patriot Hearts: Inside the Olympics That Changed a Country* (2011) co-written by journalist Gary Mason. I was cautious when using Furlong's memoir for two reasons. Firstly, the memoir lacked any source citations. Secondly, it provided a biased perspective of the 2010 Olympics. There is no critical analysis from Furlong and Mason of the negative implications of VANOC's management of the 2010 Olympics but instead they unabashedly praise the organisation's work. Despite this, Furlong's memoir provided a unique insight into VANOC's motivations for promoting the two narratives of the Canadian passion for winter sport and Canada's Aboriginal heritage in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

The main bulk of the book provides lengthy accounts of key episodes such as the final bid presentation, discussions about the 2010 Olympic vision and the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the opening ceremony. One particular episode outlined the lengthy process that VANOC underwent to organise the participation of Aboriginal people at the beginning of the opening ceremony. Furlong emphasised that not only was the inclusion of Canadian Aboriginal people imperative, it was crucial to gain the blessing of Phil Fontaine, who at the time was National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (Furlong 2011: 195). Furthermore, it would represent "Canada's First Nations people welcoming the world" and would also "validate" the event taking place on ancestral FHFN land (Furlong 2011: 196). Another source I used to analyse VANOC's narratives were newspaper articles written during the 2010 Olympic period.

The first major study on the validity of newspaper sources was Lucy Maynard Salmon's *The Newspaper and the Historian* (1923) which praised newspapers for their "ability to give colour and vivacity to the past" and create a "graphic description of society"

(Salmon in Jones 2005: 4). William Taft also stressed that newspapers could be valuable when used with caution and in conjunction with other sources in his study *Newspapers as Tools For Historians* (1970) (Taft in Jones 2005: 4). Similarly Jon Vanden Heuvel believed that “if one reads between the lines” newspapers can educate us “about the underlying assumptions and values of a society” (Jones 2005: 5). Overall, newspapers can be fruitful for providing us with “a series of snapshots of our life and our culture” and specific viewpoints of a given society (Reah 1998: 1).

To investigate these “snapshots” of Vancouver and Canada at the 2010 Olympics I mostly used local newspapers. The main local papers I used were predominantly *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* because they are two of the most widely read in Vancouver and B.C. Both newspapers had regular columns and articles about the 2010 Olympics covered most frequently by *Vancouver Sun* journalists Jeff Lee, Shelly Fralic, Daphne Braham and *The Province* journalist Damian Inwood. I also researched some Canadian newspapers like *The Globe and Mail* whose journalist Gary Mason keenly followed the 2010 Olympics. This was alongside international newspaper research of UK sources *The Times* and *The Guardian* and American newspapers *The L.A. Times*, *New York Times* and *USA Today*, to explore how the international audience’s reaction to the narratives of winter sports and Aboriginal culture. Their response ranged from the positive to the negative, for example; some of the British journalists were particularly scathing of the 2010 Olympics in its opening week.

My newspaper research on the 2010 Olympics was conducted on the internet based resource, *Nexis UK*. By collating articles on *Nexis UK* I developed a timeline of key events and developments relating to the 2010 Olympics stretching from the bid period up until the close of the Games. This early newspaper research helped me establish a background knowledge on VANOC and the 2010 Olympics which was unavailable from secondary

literature. Once I had developed a basic knowledge of the 2010 Olympics I was able to perform more detailed newspaper searches.

The two main searches I performed centred on the two narratives I investigated regarding Canadian passion for winter and the promotion of Canada's Aboriginal heritage. The *Nexis UK* database enables users to specify keywords, sort by relevance or date and categorise by publication. This enabled me to shortlist my search results considerably. For my search on the narrative of winter sport I used terms such as passion, hockey, pride, patriotic and national identity in conjunction with aspects of VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. I did the same for the second narrative and some of the terms I used were Aboriginal, FHFN, inuksuk, West-Coast First Nations, totem pole and spirit bear. These newspaper searches provided me with VANOC press releases and sound bites about various aspects of the 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. Additionally, they enabled me to gain evidence of the rhetoric that VANOC used which accompanied the images that featured in the two narratives.

Despite the benefits of newspaper research it is essential to consider the issue of bias and reliability. The articles I researched were written by a variety of journalists who all had their own political or social agendas for the pieces they wrote. For example, while Vaughn Palmer (2006: A3; 2009a: A3; 2009b: A3) was severely critical throughout much of the 2010 Olympic period, Gary Mason was more enthusiastic (2011: S1; 2010a: O3; 2010b: A8; 2008: A6). While I wanted to look for articles that contained journalists' opinions rather than just an objective report of the 2010 Olympics, it was important to ensure I considered both positive and negative arguments. However, I had to consider that the newspaper company that the journalists wrote for possibly had an influence on the nature of their 2010 Olympic reports. According to Reah Danuta, "there has probably never been a time when a newspaper owner



did not influence in some way what appeared in that paper” and she argues that the monopolisation of newspaper companies has “implications for press freedom” (1998: 8).

In the case of the 2010 Olympics the official newspaper sponsors included *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*, while *The Globe and Mail* served as the national print sponsor. The lucrative deals signed by VANOC with these newspaper companies brought in upwards of \$15 million in revenue and gave ample opportunities to advertise to a combined readership of approximately six million Canadians nationwide (Lee 2008: A1). CEO of Canwest, Dennis Skulsky, commented at the time that the objectivity of his newspapers would not be affected by their sponsorship of the 2010 Olympics, while editor-in-chief of *The Province*, Wayne Moriarty assured readers that they “would continue to work fearlessly” as the public’s watchdog (Inwood, 2008: A6). However, when *The Vancouver Sun* applauded VANOC for “a good job so far” due to the successful construction of major venues two years ahead of schedule, rather than focusing on the increased costs, the neutrality of the reporting became dubious (*Vancouver Sun* 2007: A17). It was important to bear this in mind when choosing newspaper articles to analyse or when citing a journalist’s opinion.

Overall, the document and newspaper research outlined above helped support my investigation of the two narratives in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. They were particularly crucial for investigating the context of VANOC’s images as well as analysing their content which was an important part of my visual methodology. Furthermore, they helped to fill the gap left by the lack of secondary literature on the topic of the 2010 Olympics and allowed me to establish a background knowledge to accompany my analysis of VANOC’s images. The next chapter is the result of this research.

### **CHAPTER THREE - BENEFITS OF HOSTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES**

After over ten years of preparation Vancouver's 2010 Olympics finally opened on February 12th. To begin with, however, the Games got off to a troubling start. On the same day of the opening ceremony Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritshvli tragically died in a test-run accident. In the opening week problems also ensued with the transportation system, a lack of snow which led to the cancellation of some sporting events at Cypress and a series of minor protests in downtown Vancouver (Fralic 2010a: A6). To make matters worse some of the British media were severely critical of the 2010 Olympics, earmarking them as a contender for the "worst Olympics ever" (Gleason 2010: C1).

This negative mood surrounding the 2010 Olympics quickly dissipated, however, once skier Alexandre Bilodeau won the first ever Canadian gold medal at a home Olympics on day three. This was a momentous occasion in Canadian Olympic history and a strong crowd of Canadians witnessed Bilodeau receive his prize during the medal ceremony at B.C. Place stadium. Canadian pride in their sporting success continued to swell as more gold medals flooded in. Amongst the most significant were the men's curling, ice dancers Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir, and the men's and women's ice-hockey teams who both beat the Americans. By the end of the 2010 Olympics on March 2nd, the Canadian team had won a record amount of gold medals. The phenomenal sporting success of Team Canada was just one of the memorable narratives of the 2010 Olympics.

Two other narratives that featured throughout the 2010 Olympics, and in the years of preparation that preceded them, illustrated Canadian passion for winter sport and their Aboriginal heritage. Both of these narratives promoted a romanticised or mythologised vision of Canada and Canadian values of perseverance, adaptability, tolerance and diversity in front

of a global and domestic audience. One possible argument for why VANOC accentuated these two narratives was to detract attention from doubts regarding the 2010 Olympics. The event was perceived by some government politicians, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), journalists and members of the public as an nonsensical endeavour during a period of escalating global economic crisis.

Whilst there was considerable debate about whether the event could return a profit, VANOC had committed to hosting the 2010 Olympics and it would have been unfeasible to quit. Thus, it was crucial that VANOC maximised other potential benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympics by making the most of the worldwide exposure to promote romanticised and mythologised narratives. I argue that in order to benefit from the recognition as Olympic hosts, VANOC sought to produce a vision of Canada that would be most attractive to both the global and home audiences.

This chapter will outline the economic and social background behind the bid and VANOC's preparation for the Games. I will look at the economic and social benefits that were promoted by the VBC and VANOC and discuss the financial and social concerns that 2010 Olympic naysayers raised. I propose that despite this opposition VANOC continued to advertise romantic narratives of Canada in order to promote certain Canadian values that could potentially entice tourism. Furthermore, VANOC possibly hoped to make Canadians feel good by reminding them of the common values that unite them. The rest of this chapter discusses the theory of place promotion and how the Olympics can be used as imaging strategies to maximise these two benefits. I conclude by proposing that the concept of myth-making is often an integral characteristic of imaging strategies like the Olympics

## **The VBC and the 2010 Olympic Bid**

The 2010 Olympic bid was the brainchild of Vice-President of Tourism Vancouver Bruce McMillan and the CEO Rick Antonson who both wanted to boost B.C.'s international profile. They rapidly gained the support of New Democratic Party (NDP) Premier Glen Clark, the Mayor of Vancouver Philip Owen and the Mayor of Whistler Hugh O'Reilly (Cernetig 2010: A5). By December 1st, 1998 the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) approved plans for Vancouver's bid and the VBC was established. The bid committee's 33 member board was a "who's who of B.C. real estate and corporate interest" (Shaw 2008: 8) including Jack Poole, CEO of Concert Properties, and John Furlong, CEO of the Arbutus Club, who served as CEO and President respectively.

The 2010 Olympics were promoted as "a sweeping national vision" to create new jobs, attract tourism and generate new economic investment (VBC 2002a). The potential economic benefits for Vancouver and B.C. featured heavily in the VBC's marketing campaign to promote the 2010 Olympic bid. As mentioned earlier, a factsheet released by the VBC called, *Why is Vancouver Bidding for the Right to Host the 2010 Olympics?* outlined the economic benefits that could be realised as a result of hosting the event (VBC 2002a). In a message communicated to VBC employees on August 28th, 2002, Furlong further stressed that the 2010 Olympics would also increase B.C.'s international profile, attract foreign investment, help diversify the economy and "drive provincial growth and prosperity" whilst also inducing funding for social programmes and creating jobs (VBC 2002b).

Several prominent political figures also endorsed the VBC's economic argument for hosting the 2010 Olympics. The B.C. Liberal government, spearheaded by its leader Premier Gordon Campbell, was a keen supporter of the VBC's 2010 Olympic bid. In June 2003

Campbell predicted that the 2010 Olympics would be a “beacon of hope” that would generate “thousands of new jobs and billions of additional dollars” into the B.C. economy (Keating 2003: A4). Campbell ultimately believed that “over the long-term the games won’t just be self-financing, but a legacy to this province” (Hauka 2001: A6). Meanwhile, MLA and Minister of State, Ted Nebbeling, reiterated that the 2010 Olympics would showcase B.C.’s natural resources to the world and potentially attract investment to help stabilise the economy (Nebbeling 2001: 230-231). Lieutenant-Governor at the time, Garde Gardom also described the bid as an “outstanding opportunity to show our province to the world” and maximise benefits for B.C. communities and the tourism, retail, construction and transportation industries (Gardom 2001: 42).

Overall, the 2010 Olympics were promoted by the VBC and its supporters as a self-funding event (Brown 2002: A17). Despite this enthusiasm there were numerous concerns raised about the VBC’s budget projections for hosting the 2010 Olympics. The Auditor General, Wayne Strelieff, released a rather cautious report on the economic costs of the 2010 Olympics on January 17th, 2003. While he estimated the minimum cost to the province at \$1.248 billion (Strelieff 2003: 5), the VBC had promised that the total federal and provincial budget of the 2010 Olympics would be \$1.3 billion (Bramham 2003b: B4). Whilst Strelieff agreed that the VBC’s approach to preparing the 2010 Olympic estimates was organised he believed that the contingency fund was insufficient to account for the increase in costs and inflation (2003: 4). Finally, Strelieff stressed that in order to guarantee the best possible economic outcome from hosting the 2010 Olympics, the organising committee needed “an exemplary tourism marketing program both before and after the Games” (2003: 3).

Another report written by Marvin Shaffer, Alan Greer and Celine Mauboules (2003) of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), and funded by the NDP, provided

similar conclusions. In summary, Shaffer et al. had three main apprehensions about hosting the 2010 Olympics. Firstly, they warned that the 2010 Olympics were “not attractive from a financial point of view” and would result in decreased government spending elsewhere and increased taxes (Shaffer et al. 2003: 27). Secondly, Shaffer et al. believed the economic impact would “be of limited duration” and the amount of jobs created would not affect areas of the province where unemployment was highest (2003: 27). Finally, they doubted whether the benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympics outweighed “the cost and risks” and argued that the Games were not more important than the “government services or investment that would be displaced” (2003: 27).

Concerns about the economic worth of hosting the 2010 Olympics were also held by journalists Daphne Bramham and Vaughn Palmer from *The Vancouver Sun* who regularly scrutinised the bid. In an article from February 17th, 2003 Bramham highlighted her concerns about whether the immense cost of hosting the 2010 Olympics was worth it (2003b: A14). Meanwhile, Palmer’s article from June 15th, 2002 criticised the VBC’s economic reasons for hosting the 2010 Olympics and displayed clear doubt for how B.C. would be able to handle any budget overruns in light of Gordon Campbell’s promise that “the Games will pay for themselves” (2002: A22). Palmer compared this to Jean Drapeau’s financial guarantee for the Montreal 1976 Olympics stressing that the “Last time I checked, Montrealers were still paying child support” (2002: A22). Ultimately both were sceptical about the provincial government’s ability to host the 2010 Olympics amidst the backdrop of a deteriorating economic climate globally, nationally and provincially. It was not just Bramham and Palmer who were critical of the 2010 Olympic bid.

Christopher Shaw’s group No-Games 2010 also campaigned throughout the bid phase to encourage the public to support their view that the event would be detrimental to B.C. The

group was established in the summer of 2002 by University of British Columbia (UBC) Ophthalmology professor Shaw who was joined by a dedicated group of anti-bid members including official spokesperson Phil LeGood (Shaw 2008: 26). According to Shaw and No-Games 2010, all Olympics bids are “imagineered and controlled” and replete with “crops of lies, broken promises, debt, social displacement and environment destruction” (Shaw 2008: xiv). LeGood voiced No Games 2010’s worries about the economic cost on October 5th, 2002 arguing that the Games were too expensive and unlikely to provide any significant economic benefit after the event (Hoekstra 2002: 5).

Other people were more concerned with the threat of social cuts. Shaw described how “a lot of people simply worried about the final bill and what it would really cost taxpayers” (2008: 22). He hinted at a sense of anger that emanated from a B.C. public who believed that bid funds could have been better spent on schools, hospitals and housing (2008: 35). This sense of anger and resentment over the cost and probability of benefits to the province was evident in some of the letters the VBC received from members of the B.C. public. The Carnegie Community Centre Association’s President, Margaret Prevost, wrote to the IOC on November 19th, 2002 to express how they were “vehemently opposed to the city of Vancouver’s bid” because the costs to the people of B.C. were “violent and oppressive” (Prevost 2002). Meanwhile, another B.C resident M. Sherlock<sup>9</sup> wrote to the IOC on November 18th, 2002 to complain about the threat to people’s health and safety as a result of cuts in health and social care (Sherlock 2002) while Shelia Cousins was unhappy that the expensive bid was being pursued amid cuts to the education and medical system” (Cousins 2002).

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<sup>9</sup> No first name given in archival document.

There was also correspondence from those who pleaded with the IOC not to award the 2010 Olympics to Vancouver and Whistler (Prevost 2002; Foulger 2002). Shelia Cousins explained how she encouraged everyone she knew to email the IOC, provincial and federal government officials to inform them that the 2010 Olympics were not welcome (Cousins 2002). This reaction should have been an indication to the VBC of a significant dissatisfaction with the 2010 Olympic bid. However, the VBC did little to pacify this negative public response or tackle the issues raised. Instead, the VBC responded to residents' concerns by continuing to promote the 2010 Olympic bid. One example was in a letter sent to David McCaig who had written to the VBC on September 12th, 2002 to voice his opposition to the 2010 Olympic bid. In the VBC's letter they attempted to reassure McCaig that if the bid was successful the 2010 Olympics would be "an asset to Vancouver, British Columbia and Canada and reiterated their own ambition to create a "successful and fiscally prudent Winter Games" if the bid was successful (VBC 2002c).

Despite this vocal opposition, and the best efforts of No Games 2010, the majority of the B.C. public turned out to support the 2010 Olympics at a plebiscite held on February 22nd, 2003. The non-binding poll cost the City of Vancouver government approximately \$573,000 and only allowed Vancouver residents to vote (Luba 2003: A4). As a result, communities outside of Vancouver who were concerned about the benefits for the whole of B.C. were unable to vote. Meanwhile, the No side campaign, headed by No-Games 2010, only had a budget of \$1500 and relied heavily on email campaigns to gain public support (Shaw 2008: 39-41). Despite their attempts to persuade the public to vote 'no' the result was 64 per cent in favour of the bid (Krangle 2003: A4). While the VBC may have been successful, the plebiscite confirmed that there was a sizable minority of Vancouver residents who disagreed with hosting the 2010 Olympics.



## **VANOC, the 2010 Olympics and Public Opposition**

Vancouver and Whistler were declared the official hosts of the 2010 Olympics on July 2nd, 2003. The VBC's successor, VANOC, was established on 30th September, 2003. It was led by a 20-member board of directors including representatives from the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC), the Canadian and B.C. governments, Vancouver and Whistler municipal governments, the FHFN and the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) with Poole as chairman.<sup>10</sup> Furlong was later nominated as CEO on February 20th, 2004 (Lee 2004: A1). Between September 2003 and early 2010, VANOC was responsible for planning the 2010 Olympics and promoting the Games to the global and domestic audience.

Despite the praise that VANOC received for its management of the 2010 Olympics (Vancouver Sun 2009c: A12) opposition was sparked by a number of economic and social factors. Firstly, during the preparation era meetings of VANOC's Board of Directors remained closed to the public. This attracted some criticism from Olympic opposition groups like the Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC) and the Anti Poverty Committee (APC), as well as members of the government's NDP opposition. In a newspaper article from February 2007, Jeff Lee wrote how, along with a delayed business plan, "the general lack of transparency around the operations of VANOC, is a sore point for what little organised opposition exists" (Lee 2007a: A6). Bains, meanwhile, vented his anger and frustration over "the lack of transparency in VANOC" while Shaw of the former No-Games 2010 group lamented the lack of audited financial statements and felt that all the public received were "happy-happy statements" (Lee 2007a: A6).

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<sup>10</sup> The make-up of the board was as follows: seven COC members, six federal and B.C. government representatives, two for Vancouver City Council, two for Whistler City Council, one for the FHFN and one for the CPC (Furlong 2011: 80).

This feeling had intensified by May 2007 when a series of protests were organised by the APC to highlight VANOC's lack of transparency. The organisation staged a protest at a VANOC board meeting on May 16th but were deterred by a heavy police presence which prevented them from entering (Ligaya 2007: A11). However, APC organizer David Cunningham felt the protest was still successful because it managed to expose VANOC "as a non-democratic organization" whilst illustrating them as unaccountable to the very public who were paying for the 2010 Olympics (Ligaya 2007: A11). The APC continued to protest against VANOC and on one particular occasion, during the unveiling of the Olympic clock, "one activist grabbed the microphone and shouted obscenities against the Olympics" (Shaw 2008: 218).

A second concern of 2010 Olympic naysayers was VANOC's commitment towards preventing the eviction of single-room occupancy (SRO) tenants in the DTES. The DTES of Vancouver, reportedly Canada's poorest post-code, is a community dominated by low-income housing, single tenants and plagued by drug problems (Olds 1998: 8-9). The population of the area in 2001 was recorded at 16,590 with over half of the total population consisting of single tenants with 62 per cent being male and 39 per cent in the 20-44 years age bracket (Vancouver 2006: 9). Combined with this was an unemployment rate of 22 per cent and an average household income of \$12,084 compared to the city's average of \$42,026 (Vancouver 2006: 12).

The eviction issue was raised in an IOCC report released on May 7th, 2007 that criticised VANOC's efforts to "protect low-income housing, the environment and civil liberties" (Lee 2007b: B1). Included in this report were concerns that VANOC, and the federal and B.C. provincial government, failed to stem the loss of SRO housing as a result of the 2010 Olympics taking place in Vancouver. It also deplored the loss of over 800 low-

income housing units in the DTES area since 2003 (Lee 2007b: B1). The last major mega-event in B.C., Expo '86, had caused similar concerns about evictions that were heightened by the lack of sufficient legislation to protect residents. In a bid to prevent evictions during the 2010 Olympics the Vancouver City Council enacted the Single Room Accommodation By-law in 2003. This meant that any applications to convert or demolish buildings had to be passed by the City government. Despite this, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) still reported that over 700 units of low income housing had been lost since the bid was won in July 2003 (2007: 215).

Concerns about evictions from the DTES were documented in Conrad Schmidt's 2007 documentary *Five Ring Circus*. At one stage of the documentary the group is seen staging a sit-in housing protest against evictions at a building near City Hall. (Schmidt 2007). Their concerns centred around reported figures that residents were being displaced from low-income housing in order to make way for the lucrative 2010 Olympic market. However, they were unsuccessful because City Hall rejected their concerns, while Mayor of Vancouver Sam Sullivan continued to emphasise what VANOC and the government were doing to help low-income areas.

In response to protest regarding evictions, VANOC released a report on June 5th, 2007 which pledged to ensure that communities like DTES would "not suffer adversely from the Games" by proposing the construction of 250 units of social housing post-Olympics (Mickleburgh 2007a: A6). Rod Mickleburgh described VANOC's report as "the first officially sanctioned account in Games history to consider social and economic impacts of the Olympics, as well as the environment" (2007a: A6). He explained how VANOC promised "that no 'person-at-risk' will be displaced or subjected to unreasonable rent increases" (Mickleburgh 2007a: A6).

The most frequent criticism of the 2010 Olympics, however, was its rising budget in a time of global economic uncertainty. The original \$1.3 billion public cost promised by the VBC rose to \$1.63 billion in a business plan that was submitted on May 8th, 2007 (Hume 2007: A7). In January 30th, 2009 VANOC re-estimated that the overall budget would now be \$1.76 billion (Mickleburgh 2009a: A13). Alongside the budget increases were a series of IOC, provincial government and federal government bailouts. On October 26th, 2009 the IOC committed an extra \$22 million to ensure that the 2010 Olympics would not result in a deficit (Mickleburgh 2009b: A8) and by July 2009 only \$310,000 remained from a \$100 million contingency fund that the provincial and federal government had provided (Hutchinson 2009: A10).

In addition to budget concerns, VANOC struggled to generate interest in VIP ticket packages which executive vice-president of revenue, marketing and communications Dave Cobb had boasted would sell out. These packages cost \$285,000 and included tickets for all Olympic events, ceremonies, a part in the torch relay and a chauffeur-driven service for the duration of the event (Mickleburgh 2008: A5). However, a year later the target for sales of these ticket packages was reduced to 50 (Mickleburgh 2009a: A8). To add to their woes by August 2009 VANOC had yet to sign two Olympic Programme sponsors worth \$30 million, while \$12 billion in advertising space remained unsold (Lee 2009: A3).

Despite pressure from 2010 Olympic critics about the cost of hosting the event and the failure to meet targets, VANOC and their supporters continued to insist that the Games would bring significant economic benefits to B.C. In particular, they emphasised the high revenue they expected to receive from broadcasting and sponsorship rights as well as the exposure that B.C., and Canada, would receive (Lee 2007c: A1; Penner 2008; B3). Cobb perennially assured the public that despite the economic difficulties and budget problems that VANOC

faced, they were still positive about the potential financial legacy from hosting the 2010 Olympics (Lee 2008b: A1; Mason 2009: A4; Mickleburgh 2007c: S4). The B.C. government also supported VANOC throughout the 2010 Olympic preparation period. In September 2006, B.C. Economic Development Minister Colin Hansen insisted that the benefits of hosting the 2010 Olympics would continue to “far outweigh the costs” (Kane 2006: B6). Elsewhere, shortly before the event, Mary McNeil, B.C.’s Minister of State for the Olympics, believed that B.C. was lucky to be hosting the Olympics while the global economy was being “challenged” (Fong 2010: B1).

Overall, the preparation period for the 2010 Olympics was marred by debates between VANOC, its supporters and those who were concerned about, or opposed towards, the economic and social impact of the event. This was further complicated by a global recession which worsened once VANOC’s 2010 Olympic marketing campaign stepped up a gear after the 2006 and 2008 Olympics in Turin and Beijing. The economic and social issues discussed here show that there were some members of the B.C. and Canadian public who were not fans of the Games. However, representing this dissatisfaction and the urban poverty of DTES in VANOC’s brand identity and marketing campaign would arguably not have helped attract tourists and make Canadians feel good. Thus, the other images chosen by VANOC can be seen as their attempt to showcase or ‘sell’ Canadian narratives in order to increase tourism from abroad and to maximise the ‘feel-good’ factor amongst the Canadian public.

### **The Olympic Games, Place Promotion and Myth-Making**

One of the most attractive benefits of hosting the Olympics is the potential for place promotion. The theory and practice of place promotion has been examined by a plethora of

academics (Ashworth and Voogd 1994; Fretter 1993; Gold and Ward 1994; Hubbard 1996; Kearns and Philo 1993; Kotler and Gertner 20002; Ward 1998). Civic boosterism, place marketing, city branding, destination marketing and re-imaging are some of the different terms used to refer to the activity of place promotion, which involves the (re)presentation of a city and/or a nation at a regional, national or international level (Smith 2005: 398-99; Hall 1998: 4).

Place promotion encompasses the “conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of a place” (Gold and Ward 1994: 2) which can include “the deployment of conventional marketing tools, such as slogans, logos and promotional literature” but also “staging events, constructing iconic buildings and implementing sophisticated public relations strategies” (Smith 2005: 399). The practice has been employed in a diverse number of ways by different governments, organisations and businesses. For example, during the age of colonial expansion, Western European and East Coast American newspapers advertised the exotic places they had discovered to “entice migrants to venture into the unknown” (Gold and Ward 1994: 2). Another example is the promotional activities of seaside resorts who “have long plied their wares through press advertisements, posters and brochures” which have illustrated the “golden sands, invigorating climates, beaches washed by sparkling waters, welcoming hotels and homely guest houses” (Gold and Ward 1994: 2).

Place promotion thus sought to ‘sell’ a place in order to entice economic activity through investment and tourism (Kearns and Philo 1993: 3; Smith 2005: 399). As a result, marketing budgets have increased as governments, local authorities and businesses have sought to attract these benefits (Hubbard 1996: 28). But how did place promotion come to be held in such high esteem? The first explanation for its popularity is the deindustrialisation of western economies which accelerated in the 1970s (Hall 1998: 2; Gold and Ward 1994: 7;

Whitson and Macintosh 1996: 280). As part of this process the traditional resource and manufacturing industries declined and were superseded by 'cleaner' industries such as service, communication technology and, most significantly in the context of place promotion, tourism.

The second major factor which made place promotion an urgent task was the increase in globalisation which occurred during the late twentieth century. Globalisation, according to Milton Friedman (2000), is an international system that enables "individuals, corporations, and nation states to reach around the world farther, deeper, and cheaper than ever before" (Friedman in Brooks 2003: 225) and is characterised by an increased movement in goods, services, capital and tourism (Abu-Laban 2003: 264). Philip Kotler, Donald Haider and Irving Rein (1993) believe that the effects of globalisation have led to a culture of "place wars," a phenomenon whereby places compete "for their economic survival with other places and regions not only in their own country but throughout the world" (Hall 1998: 4). In summary, place promotion is a tactic adopted by governments and businesses to promote their city, region or country in a competitive global market (Ashworth and Voogd 1994; Gold and Ward 1994; Kotler et al. 1993; Kotler and Gertner 2002).

One of the most popular vehicles of place promotion is to host mega-events such as the Olympic Games because of the potential worldwide exposure that can be gained from hosting one of the world's most illustrious sporting events. The amount of exposure afforded to Olympic host nations has increased since the early 1980s due to improvements in telecommunications technology which has seen audience television figures soar (Whitson and Horne 2006: 73; Whitson 2004: 1216; Horne 2007: 83). A larger global audience has made hosting the Olympics highly desirable because bidding cities believe that it allows them to promote themselves in front of potential global investors and tourists.

C. Michael Hall believes that mega-events, like the Olympics, are an example of “imaging strategies” or, “conscious attempts by places to seduce” by packaging “specific representations of a particular way of life or lifestyle for consumption” (2003: 200). Hall regards imaging strategies as policy responses to the economic and social impact of deindustrialisation and restructuring of economies (2003: 201). Their principal aims include: “attracting tourism expenditure, fostering positive images of the host, reimagining previously held negative images” and “providing an attractive environment for professionals and white-collar workers” (Hall 2003: 200). Imaging strategies involve the commodification of a city’s culture as a product “to be bought and sold in the global marketplace” in order to “attract investment, visitor, and employment ventures” (Hall 2003: 201). They are thus being used as an opportunity to advertise the host city, region or country as an economically, culturally and socially attractive places to visit, work or live. One of the target audiences for place promotion is clearly tourists.

David Whitson and Donald Macintosh believe that the value of tourism has made international sporting events “one of the most powerful and effective vehicles for the showcasing of place” (1996: 280). There are two levels of tourism that are generated by hosting the Olympics. Firstly, hosting the Games is accompanied by a huge audience of spectators who visit during the two weeks of the event which in turn generates economic activity. This economic activity is a result of spectators spending their money in the area on accommodation, food, gifts and other attractions otherwise known as incremental tax revenue (Whitson and Macintosh 1996: 284). By hosting a successful event Olympic organisers hope that the Games visitors will also be encouraged to revisit the host or places elsewhere in the country and persuade their friends at home to visit too. The second level of tourism derives from the interest that is generated amongst the television viewers who watch the Olympics in



their living rooms.

I argue that VANOC used the 2010 Olympics as an imaging strategy to promote two narratives about Canada to produce an attractive image of the host in order to entice tourists. However, another target audience of imaging strategies is the host's home audience. According to Hall, imaging strategies are also constructed as a way of increasing "the public spirit by making communities feel good about themselves" (Hall 2003: 200). This type of benefit is often an intangible construct and thus much harder to measure than tourism. Exactly what the host nation is made to feel good about is much harder to determine than a mega-event's economic impact which can be defined by a concrete set of figures.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, research on the 'feel good' factor of hosting sports mega events is slim.

Amongst the researchers who do attempt to investigate the 'feel-good' factor are Cornelissen and Maennig in their study on the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany (2010). They propose three ways that sports mega events can help create it. Most significant to their study is the idea that mega events enable an "instrumentalisation of the mass feelings of pride and passion" (2010: 99). Cornelissen and Maennig argue that the 'feel-good' factor is used by political elites as a defence against criticisms of overspending or to "gain prestige and standing in the international sphere" (2010: 99-100). Thus, as a result "sports mega events potential 'feel-good' effects may be more contrived than accidental" (Cornelissen and Maennig 2013: 100). Furthermore, Cornelissen and Maennig contend that "the materialisation of the 'feel-good' factor too often depends on the success of the home team" (2010: 106).

Jonathan Grix also shares similar misgivings on the 'feel-good' factor of mega-events. He argues that "there is scant empirical evidence to suggest that a 'feel-good' factor continues much beyond the event itself or whether it leads to the desired change of behaviour hoped for

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<sup>11</sup> Even collating economic data about the success of mega-events is difficult and can take some time to acquire.

by policy-makers” (Grix 2012: 5). Furthermore, he explains that hosting sports mega-events is:

Clearly considered by states to provide a major contribution in the process of improving their nation s image, profiling and showcasing themselves globally and ‘attracting others through inbound tourism, increased trade and a growing sense of nation pride through the often experienced, but under-researched ‘feel-good factor (Grix 2013: 17).

Whether this effect lasts, however, is not within the scope of this study. Instead, my study aims to deconstruct how VANOC s images portrayed the Canadian narratives and values discussed, which *may* have helped foster good-feeling amongst the Canadian public. One of the characteristics of place promotion that is employed by imaging strategists, and the focus of this thesis, is the concept of myth.

According to Chambers Dictionary, a myth can be “a commonly-held belief that is untrue or without foundation” (2009: 1018). The national character, or identity, of a country is often shaped by the myths that a nation tells about itself. According to Daniel Francis, myths help to “organize the past into a coherent story” which in turn “simplifies the complex ebb and flow of events and weaves together the disparate thread of experience” (1997: 11). Similarly, Duncan Bell talks about a “national mythscape” which contains “the myths of the nation” that “are forged, transmitted, reconstructed and negotiated constantly” (Bell 2003: 75).

In the case of Canada, myths appear through the guise of the “images and stories that seem to express the fundamental beliefs that Canadians hold about themselves” which with

heavy repetition form the “master narrative” that helps to bring Canadians closer together (Francis 1997: 10). Francis believes that this is particularly crucial in the case of Canada because of the absence of any “common religion, language or ethnicity” and the large geographical spread of its population which means “Canadians depend on this habit of ‘consensual hallucination’ more than any other people” (Francis 1997: 10).

However, the danger of myths is that they are too often constructed “by deliberate manipulation” (Bell 2003: 75) and in some instances present “a simplistic and uni-vocal story” where the memories that are “too awkward to fit into the mythscape, are left out” (Bell 2003: 77). John Ralston Saul is also cautious about myth, explaining how “on a bad day mythology encourages the denial of reality” because of its innate ability to cause “distortion” (1998: 11). This is the same concept that Roland Barthes discussed in *Myth Today*, as seen earlier in this dissertation. Barthes explains how myth’s function is to “empty reality” (1957: 169) and gives itself a “natural and eternal justification” (1957: 170).

In VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, there were several myths that implanted themselves in this way, within the two narratives about Canada. The next chapter discusses how myths about the Canadian north and its national sport hockey are played out in VANOC’s representation of Canada at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Chapter five then attempts to analyse how myths such as the Vanishing Indian and the Performing Indian misrepresented and appropriated Aboriginal culture, while also creating the impression of a socially harmonious relationship between Aboriginal people, the state and other Canadian citizens.

## **CHAPTER 4 – NARRATIVE OF CANADIAN PASSION FOR WINTER SPORT**

One of the obvious legacies from hosting the 2010 Olympics was the sporting success of Team Canada. For the first time in Canadian Olympic history the Canadian team managed to secure a gold medal on home soil. This accomplishment was surpassed by the end of the Games as Canada became record-breakers by winning the most gold medals ever by a participating nation since the Winter Olympics began. These achievements worked well alongside VANOC's narrative of Canadian passion for winter sports. Whilst this type of narrative is not unexpected for a Winter Olympics, the case of Vancouver was different.

There are two reasons why winter sports images proliferated VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. Firstly, as Vancouver was not a typical winter city VANOC had to frame it as such. An overuse of winter sports images was one way to do this. Secondly, the theme of winter sports is a key aspect of two of the most enduring Canadian myths - hockey and the North. These myths have been attributed with emphasising ideal Canadian values of adaptability, strength and perseverance. This chapter investigates how these myths and values are present in the images of winter sport in VANOC's brand identity and marketing campaign.

The first part of this chapter provides an insight into how the myths of the North and hockey function in the Canadian relationship with winter sport. I outline the close connection between Canadians and hockey in childhood, the various forms it is followed and celebrated, and its relationship with the land and the 'Northern myth'. I then discuss how this symbolic power of hockey has been used by others before introducing VANOC's own narrative. The rest of this chapter analyses some of the winter sports images that VANOC used and attempts to explain how the myths of hockey and the North are present. Firstly, I explain how VANOC

sought to frame the city in a winter environment by including images of winter Olympians and their passionate fans. Secondly, I analyse how VANOC reinforced Vancouver as a naturally active Winter Olympic city by looking at a series of posters designed specifically for the event. I argue that the posters inserted Vancouver, a coastal-mountain location, into a winter environment. The posters also reinforce the connection between the land and Canadians.

The rest of this chapter explains how other features of VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign also do this. The examples I focus on are screenshots from the opening ceremony and images of hockey. I explain how the myths of the North and hockey function in these images arguing that they emphasise certain Canadian values to present a romanticised narrative of winter sports in Canadian society. I argue that the images presented a romanticised vision of Canada in order to appeal to an international audience of tourists and make the Canadian audience feel good about themselves by reminding them of the values that unite them. In particular, I believe that hockey's role in Canadian society was romanticised and mythologised into a racialised, masculine narrative at the 2010 Olympics. This chapter concludes by summarising the narrative of winter sport before introducing another romanticised and mythologised narrative that also offers a racialised view of Canada.

### **Significance of Sport in Canadian Society and Culture**

According to Barrie Houlihan, some social scientists perceive sport as “an integral” and “defining element of the culture of a community” (Houlihan 1997: 116). While Clifford Geertz (1972) argues that sport “is a powerful metaphor which reveals the most deep seated values of a culture”, Henry Morton (1963) believes that watching a “nation at play ‘reveals

the stuff of its social fabric” (Houlihan 1997: 116). This is particularly evident in the case of Canada where sport is seen by some scholars as an important feature of the country’s history, society, culture and identity (Blake 2009; Metcalfe 2003; Jackson 2001). Alan Metcalfe believes that “sport is one of the best single indicators of the nature of Canada and Canadian culture” because “it throws a light on the things that bind us or divide us” (2003: 179).

The value of sport to Canadians is also echoed in the federal government’s commitment to funding sport. Metcalfe explains how sport has a heavy presence in the day-to-day life across Canada as evidenced by the breadth of facilities that have been established and operated with public money (2003: 190). Meanwhile, Houlihan states that “there was a threefold increase in federal government annual funding between 1978 and 1987 to a total of \$60 million” (1997: 116). The federal government explained in a report called *Fitness and Amateur Sport* (1992) that this funding commitment was “in keeping” with sport’s contribution to Canadian “culture, national heritage and economy” (Houlihan 1996: 116). One of the most popular winter sports in Canada is ice-hockey.

Known simply as hockey in Canada, the sport has been a consistent feature of Canadian history, society, and culture since the early days of Confederation (Blake 2009: 3). According to Metcalfe, the sport’s presence intensified after the 1950s with the increase in artificial ice-rinks which made hockey more accessible to the Canadian public beyond listening or watching professional hockey (Metcalfe 2003: 180). This enabled hockey to be played by more children and adults across Canada and thus became a common feature of Canadian life. Blake explains that there is a popular belief that “a true Canadian has an ingrained, cradle-to-grave attachment to hockey” which has led to the assumption “that all Canadians play hockey” (2009: 22).

Rob Beamish and Roch Carrier lend credence to this claim with their discussions on the role of hockey in their Canadian childhood. Beamish, a former varsity player himself, states that playing hockey is a part of growing up in Canada. With half a million children playing minor hockey in 2006, “hockey’s essence is nurtured by the intense bonds between parent and child as faltering steps give way to powerful glides and slicing tight turns” (Beamish 2006). Most importantly hockey has the power to infiltrate memories. Beamish explains how:

Like the towering stained glass windows of medieval cathedrals, hockey’s reality is captured in the small vignettes that constitute our lives and that we reconstitute as memories recalled” (2006).

Meanwhile, Carrier emphasised how whilst growing up in Montreal “our real life was on the rink” (Beamish 2006) and the “hockey sweater did more than keep you warm” but “told everyone who you were” (Beamish 2006). This childhood attachment to hockey carries on into Canadian adulthood.

Hockey has been celebrated in a variety of forms over the twentieth century. The most popular of these is the NHL Stanley Cup which culminates in a playoff between the top two teams which captivate the Canadian public each year. Whitson calls the Stanley Cup playoffs “a ritual of Canadian spring” (2001: 223) while Francis emphasises the tournament, and its parent programme *Hockey Night in Canada*, as a “weekly reconciliation” of Canadians’ regional, linguistic and ethnic differences (1997: 168). However, hockey has also been criticised for being an exclusively white male sport that actually exacerbates these differences (Adams 2006; Pitter 2006; Robidoux 2002; Whitson and Gruneau 1994). The debate about

whether hockey helps to absolve these differences is an integral part of the hockey myth which is discussed later on in this chapter when I look at two images of hockey in VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Other memorable tournaments in Canadian hockey history include international competitions like the Summit Series, Canada Cup and the World Cup. The Summit Series of 1972, a series of eight matches between the Soviet Union and Canada, has a particularly special place in the hearts and minds of Canadian hockey fans. Neil Earle describes how the Summit Series, which was watched or listened by twelve million Canadians, has become "an enduring folk memory" for most Canadians (2006: 322). Some of the most fiercely fought international matches today take place at the Winter Olympics.

The Canadian hockey team has dominated since the first Winter Olympics at Chamonix in 1924 up until 1956 when third place was considered a disgrace (Metcalf 2003: 189). Metcalf explains that this led to an intense government focus on sport which led to Bill C-131 on September 25th 1961 and the formation of Hockey Canada in 1969 (Metcalf 2003: 189-190). In recent times Canada has improved at the Winter Olympics thanks in part to a change of rules in Olympic hockey. Since 1998 NHL players have been able to participate at the Winter Olympics thus dramatically improving the performance of Team Canada (Joyce 1995). Since the women's gold medal at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics, the Canadian team have won at least one medal. The 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics were the most successful for Canada with both hockey teams taking home the gold medal, a feat which would be repeated at the 2010 Olympics.

Hockey is also seen as an important element of Canadian history, society and culture because of its close relationship to the harsh winter environment of Canada. McKinley and Roland Barthes believe that the development of hockey's place in Canadian life was a means



of adapting to the land (Blake 2009: 20; Beamish 2006). Jason Blake also discusses this issue in his study *Canadian Hockey Literature: A Thematic Study* (2009). He describes how hockey is often seen as the “communion of two fundamental Canadian realities: water and the cold” and has been “naturalised in Canadian thought as if it grew magically from the soil or ice” (Blake 2009: 5). Blake believes that hockey has been “an effective unifying symbol for a vast and heterogeneous country” because despite the differing geographic surroundings, the basic nature of the game remains the same (Blake 2009: 17). This conjures up images of one of the most popular Canadian myths - the ‘Northern myth.’

The ‘Northern myth’ is a concept that took hold of the Canadian imagination during the colonisation of Canada. Daniel Coleman describes how settlers believed that “Canada was once a wilderness” until Europeans overcame “the overwhelming odds of nature” to establish a “cultivated, orderly society” (2006: 28). In relation to this Northern myth, hockey allows Canadians to elaborate their northerness because it “embodies the northern landscape” (Francis 1997: 167-168). Furthermore, “the blank expanse of ice” that hockey is played on, “represents the vast, frigid dispassionate wilderness” while every hockey game “dramatises the struggle for survival in such a difficult land” (Francis 1997: 168). This theme is explored further when I analyse VANOC’s images of hockey in the final part of this chapter.

Today, Blake describes how hockey has become “omnipresent in Canadian society” and exists in a number of guises which include: playing, watching and in the daily interaction between Canadians (2009: 3). Hockey is not only an important feature of daily life in Canada but a “legitimate expression of Canadian national history and identity” (Robidoux 2002: 209). While Doug Beardsley writes that it is not “possible to imagine what Canadian life would be like without hockey” (Blake 2009: 6) Margaret MacNeill also believes hockey is a “crucial symbol within Canada’s struggle to achieve international recognition and in its efforts to

create a unifying sense of identity within the country” (1996: 103).

Blake elucidates further on how hockey’s symbolism in Canadian society and culture has been used by others. He explains how “hockey’s rise has been helped by a Canadian cultural insecurity” and a “widespread belief that we have an impoverished cultural tradition” (2009: 23). Furthermore, Blake explains that “For a country that often feels fragmented, the hockey arena is a convenient gathering place and focal point” and that “it is easier for Canadians to latch en masse onto hockey as a marker of nationhood” (2009: 29). Blake believes this has led to hockey being used by others in an attempt to bring Canadians closer together.

Hockey has also been used as a national symbol for political purposes by the Canadian federal government. In the Pierre Trudeau era, hockey was used as a tool to “enhance the state’s territorial integrity and national identity” (Houlihan 1997: 125-126). According to Houlihan, “the government’s promotion of hockey, as epitomising the Canadian personality, achieved its greatest success during the series of passionately nationalistic matches” between Canada and the Soviet Union in 1972 (1997: 126). More recently, the conservative government of Stephen Harper, renowned as a lover of hockey, has used it for political gain.

Jay Scherer and Lisa McDermott describe how Harper has used hockey as “the pre-eminent signifier of a particular ‘brand’ of Canadianness” to appeal to ‘ordinary’ Canadians (2011: 107). This was achieved through actively promoting Harper’s association with hockey in the hope it would resonate with the Canadian public. Lawrence Martin also explained how promoting hockey has been part of Harper’s populist pitch and “the new patriotism he is trying to instil” (2012: A13). Martin describes how Harper is always “on hockey platforms promoting the sport, every chance he gets while his government renovates hockey rinks across the land and gives tax credits for kids’ hockey equipment” (2012: A13). Between 2003

and 2010, hockey was also used in similar ways by the VBC and VANOC in their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

The 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics were attributed by the VBC for lighting a fire within Canadians (VBC 2003a) and it was hoped that the 2010 Olympics could do the same. The VBC emphasised how the importance of sport to Canadians would make their 2010 Olympics unique. According to the VBC:

Canada's love and success of winter sports will provide a *significant emotional* backdrop to our Games and allow the *intense participatory pride* of all Canadians to infuse our Games with *competitive* excitement and *compelling* messages and imagery from across our great land (2003d: 112 - italics mine).

This valuation of sport at the Olympics was linked to VANOC's mission for the 2010 Olympics which was "to touch the soul of the nation and inspire the world by creating and delivering an extraordinary Olympic and Paralympic experience with its lasting legacies" (VANOC 2008b: ii). Alongside this mission was a vision for the 2010 Olympics to create "a stronger Canada whose spirit is raised by its passion for sport, culture and sustainability" (VANOC 2008b: ii). This mission and vision was held in high esteem by Furlong in particular. On August 28th, 2002 Furlong told employees that if the bid was successful it would become a "moment of pride and celebration that Canadians will remember forever" (Furlong 2002).

Overall, the 2010 Olympic bid, and the promotional campaign that followed once Vancouver became the 2010 Olympic host city, presented Canada as a passionate winter sports nation in front of the IOC and a worldwide and domestic audience. The celebration of

Canadian Winter Olympians, audience passion and participation, and the inclusion of images of hockey all contributed to a mythologised and romanticised narrative of Canadian passion for winter sports at the 2010 Olympics. This narrative also helped to emphasise the type of key Canadian values outlined by VANOC above, as well as those inherent as part of the myths of the North and hockey. The rest of this chapter attempts to support this argument with an analysis of some of the images.

### **Images of Winter Olympians and Canadian Sports Fans**

The selection of Vancouver as the host of the 2010 Winter Olympics was an unusual choice. Unlike the more wintry environment of more remote areas of B.C. and their neighbours Alberta, Vancouver is not a place known for its snow. While some of the events took place over an hour away at the ski resorts of Whistler and Cypress, where even they faced weather problems, much of the 2010 Olympics took place in Vancouver. Thus, whilst it would not have been unusual for a winter Olympic host to emphasise a passion for winter sports, in the case of Vancouver it was notable. Katherine McCallum, Amy Spencer and Evelyn Wyly's study, 'The City as an Image-Creation Machine: A Critical Analysis of Vancouver's Bid' (2005) explains how images of sport and place were used. The authors discuss the implicit and explicit images of place in the 2010 Olympic bid and how they wove a narrative of Vancouver by analysing the bid questionnaire and video presentation to the IOC on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2003 (McCallum et al. 2005: 24). The examples which McCallum et al. focus on emphasise the "pristine urban nature, multicultural social harmony, and vibrant local cultures of sport" (2005: 24).

Through their visual investigation McCallum et al. explore how the VBC “functioned as the dynamic and innovative image producer, attempting to craft place based symbols that would be strong enough to impress the International Olympic Committee (IOC)” resulting in a “compelling and successful narrative of visual metaphors and local images” (2005: 26). According to McCallum et al., the VBC needed to create this type of identity in order to “appeal to the presumed preferences of a tiny, elite transnational audience” (2005: 27). One way that the VBC and VANOC sought to achieve this effect was to include images of Canadian Winter Olympians in action or celebrating their victories. In the second bid book one example shows an athlete with a helmet and sunglasses on possibly celebrating a victory (figure 1). Another type of celebratory image shows Canadian Olympians proudly posing with their medals (figure 2).



Figure 1 (VBC 2003d: 113).

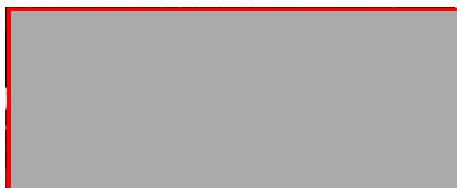


Figure 2 (VBC 2003c: 187).

This representation of Canadian Olympians reappeared throughout VANOC’s preparation for the 2010 Olympics, in particular during the promotional video *With Glowing Hearts*. The video features images of Canadian athletes celebrating at the 2006 Turin Olympics (VANOC 2008: 0.22-0.23) and famous Canadian Olympians talking about their successes. Overall, the

VBC and VANOC emphasised Canada's previous Olympic successes by including images of Canadian Olympians celebrating or partaking in emotional, patriotic moments at medal ceremonies.

In the case of the two promotional videos they were accompanied with text linking the Olympians' achievements with patriotic feelings associated with being Canadian. For example, in *It's Our Time to Shine*, the strap lines, "Because Salt Lake lit a fire within us all" and "Because it inspires greatness" are bookended by images of Canadian Olympians (VBC 2003a: 0.17; 1.41). One could argue that these types of images and rhetoric were used as a way of boosting the potential 'feel-good' factor of the 2010 Olympics amongst the Canadian public. It could also be argued that they are used to produce a romantic and sentimentalised narrative of the importance of sport to the Canadian public which appeals to an international audience and thus increases viewing figures. This is particularly important for attracting lucrative sponsorship contracts which are an essential source of revenue for Olympic organising committees.

Ultimately, the images of Canadian Olympians celebrating were enhanced by Team Canada's performance at the 2010 Olympics. Their success was celebrated passionately by proud Canadian spectators at the games or in their own living rooms across the country. This outpouring of Canadian pride for their winter Olympians was described by VANOC as the 'winner' of the 2010 Olympics. Furlong reminisces in his memoir how "Wild, happy patriotism" broke out across Canada as "the country stopped what it was doing to put on its Team Canada jerseys and cheer" (2011: 282-283). Meanwhile, the B.C. press also focused heavily on the presence of Canadian pride at the 2010 Olympics (Lee 2010a: A5; Levitz 2010: 13; Mulgrew 2010: A4).

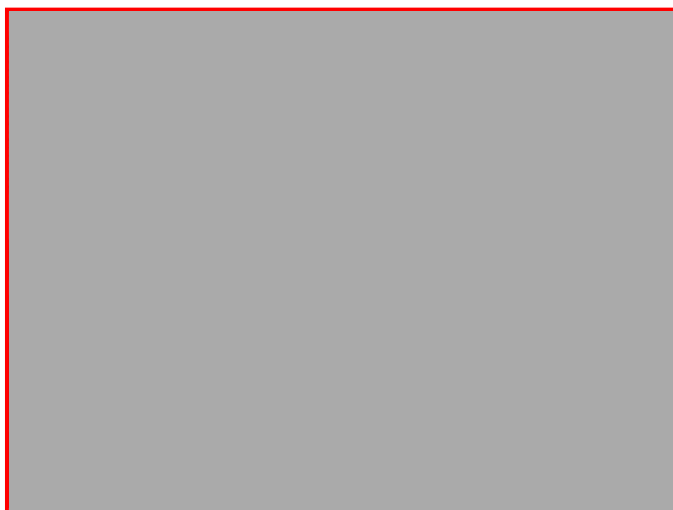


Figure 3 (Moss 2010).

Jeff Lee described how a unique Canadian patriotism blossomed in Vancouver as tens of thousands of Canadians “dressed in flags...with faces painted red and white” (Lee 2010a). Bruce Arthur (2010: OL1) also commented on the appearance of Canadian spectators describing how they transformed themselves physically through their red and white uniform of face paint, shirts and maple leaf flags (figure 3). Meanwhile, *The Windsor Star* waxed lyrical about how the Games showed how Canada could be “fiercely loyal, proudly Canadian, and not the least bit embarrassed to let the world know it” (2010: A6).

The international media also commented on how Canadian spectators at the 2010 Olympics were more confident and louder than ever before. Bill Plaschke from *The L.A. Times* paid tribute to the hosts calling them “gold” and applauded the way Canadian spectators showcased their “hearts glowing like that moon that hung nightly over the Burrard Inlet, a light on the front porch of a house that felt like a home” (2010). Elsewhere, John Branch from *The New York Times* described how the 2010 Olympics had transformed the Canadian audience into “a unified, full-throated fan base” who ecstatically cheered their athletes, adopted the Team Canada jersey as “a national uniform” and “draped themselves in

the maple-leafed national flag” (2010). Outside of North America, France’s Le Monde called Canadian patriotism “the great winner of the Olympic Games” (O’Neil 2010) while the BBC’s Ollie Williams was struck by the transformation of Vancouver into “a city painted red and white” who citizens partied all night long “on the crest of a wave of national fervour” (Williams 2010).

Clearly, some of the displays of passion for winter sports and the explosion of Canadian morale and pride occurred spontaneously. While VANOC could not have planned for Canadian team’s huge success, and the associated ‘feel-good’ factor that occurred amongst Canadian spectators, they did contribute towards it with their downtown celebration sites and 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. For example, images of passionate Canadian spectators in their 2010 Olympic marketing campaign helped to emphasise the importance of winter sport to Canadian citizens.

One image of a crowd of Canadian fans cheering on sport in volume one of the bid book is accompanied by VBC’s description of “Canadian fans [who] are enthusiastic supporters of international sports events, consistently exceeding ticket sales expectations for such hallmark events” (figure 4). This indicates that the VBC were aware that the passionate Canadian crowds had the potential to increase ticket sales and subsequently promoted this fact to the IOC. Furthermore, the Canadian flag and jerseys also emphasised that Canadian’s passion for winter sport was inextricably linked to their patriotism which could be another unique selling point for their 2010 Olympics. Similar images like this one also appeared in the VBC’s promotional bid video (VBC 2003a: 3.04) and VANOC’s promotional video *With Glowing Hearts* (VANOC 2008: 0.01-0.02).





Figure 4 (VBC 2003b: 86)



Figure 5 (Moss 2010)

As well as images of Olympians, VANOC also included images of everyday Canadians participating in recreational activity. In the bid material, images included shots of happy children playing hockey (VBC 2003a: 2.31) and posing in their hockey jerseys with their equipment (VBC 2003a: 2.48) and adults ice skating (VBC 2003a: 2.34-2.37) skiing (figure 6; figure 7) and snowboarding (VBC 2003d: 111).



Figure 6 (VBC 2003b: 53).

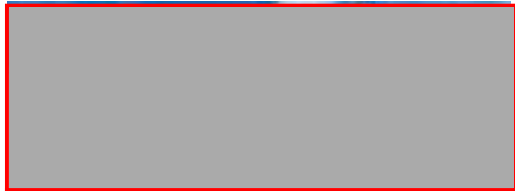


Figure 7 (VBC 2003c: 11).

For practical reasons, the inclusion of these type of images helped to frame Vancouver “as a naturally active city” and a “sport-conscious’ place that would be a natural fit as an Olympic host” (McCallum et al. 2005: 36). This was necessary during the bid stages in order to convince the IOC that Vancouver should be the 2010 Winter Olympic hosts. According to McCallum et al., this was especially obvious in their final presentation video which presented Vancouver “as an embodiment of the Olympic image and movement” (2005: 36).

The overall purpose of including images of everyday Canadians engaged in sport was likely meant to encourage excitement around the 2010 Olympics, similar to the methods that were used by Calgary organisers in 1988 (Hiller 1990; Wamsley and Heine 1996). The two videos *It’s Our Time to Shine* and *With Glowing Hearts* were targeted at the home audience to promote the 2010 Olympic bid and games. By including images which showed ‘normal’ Canadians alongside Canadian Olympic athletes, the VBC and VANOC were illustrating that the 2010 Olympics were more than just an elite sport event and that sport mattered to everyone. Mostly, the images served as a reminder to Canadians that sport is an integral part of Canadian lifestyle while reinforcing to the international audience that despite the atypical winter climate of Vancouver, they were a suitable Winter Olympic city.

Another representation of winter sport which reinforced these two points featured in a series of posters by VANOC which were used in their 2010 Olympic marketing campaign and brand identity. The posters consisted of a series of digital designs which showcased different Winter Olympic sports. Examples included a slalom snowboarder, bobsled drivers, snowboard half-pipe, a male curler, and a female ice skater, all of which were depicted in action. The posters depicted winter athletes against Vancouver's coastal-mountain setting. This is visible in the poster's swirls of blue, green and white, popular colours in VANOC's brand identity and marketing campaign, which allude to both climates. Components of the posters such as birds, trees, flowers, rolling hills and waves, help construct Vancouver, while the white or ice-blue foregrounds make up the winter landscape. The juxtaposition of these colours and symbols of nature, alongside the Winter Olympians, helps to reinforce the notion of Vancouver as a winter Olympic city.



Figure 8 (VANOC 2008c)

As well as establishing Vancouver as a winter Olympic city, the posters (figure nine in particular) help position the 2010 Olympics as Canada's games. While there are no Canadian flags, the use of red, white and small maple leaves seen in figure nine are positioned next to Aboriginal artwork. Furthermore, at the bottom of the poster features the 2010 Olympic motto "With Glowing Hearts" which is taken from the Canadian national anthem. This further strengthens VANOC's concept of the 2010 Olympics as Canada's games. This thinking is supported by VANOC's explanation of the posters.



Figure 9 (VANOC 2008d)

Leo Obstbaum, artistic director of the 2010 Olympics, described how the posters were "full of colour" and brought "expression, emotion and even greater dynamics to the athletes images" (Hatano 2008). VANOC designer Jason Esteban explains how they wanted to

“heroise the athletes much like you see in a superhero comic” and so ensured “that some parts of the athlete were bigger and looked like they were coming off the page” (COSP 2012: 3). This dynamic and colourful representation of Olympian athletes in the posters, and the scaled down pictogram versions, were intended to “capture the intensity and motion of the athlete” to inspire the Canadian and international audience (Hatano 2008). Furthermore, one of the primary aims of the posters was to “inspire people not only about sport, but also about Canada’s culture and environment” (Hatano 2008). Like VANOC, the poster designers wanted to create “a stronger Canada whose spirit is raised by its passion for sport” (VANOC 2008b: ii).

Another effect of these posters is to reinforce the connection between Canadians, winter sport and the land. As discussed earlier, winter sports, like hockey, have been seen as a way of adapting to Canada’s harsh winter landscape. While it is clear that Vancouver’s environment is not typically wintry, the ‘Northern myth’ is as much a state of mind as well as a climatic experience. The posters reinforce the idea of winter sports evolving naturally from the landscape as the athletes appear to burst out of it. They are just one example of how the ‘Northern myth’ and Canada’s close relationship to the land was emphasised in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

## **Northern Myth, hockey and the Canadian Landscape at the 2010 Olympics**

Another example features in the 'Landscape of a Dream' section of the 2010 opening ceremony.<sup>12</sup> This section sees Donald Sutherland narrating the story of the Canadian landscape. One of the most memorable moments features at the beginning when a small group of people venture across a frozen plain only for it to crack not long after. The story of the Canadian landscape ends with a scene called the 'Peaks of Endeavour' (figure 10) where swarms of red and white bedecked hockey players, skiers and snowboarders come together to overcome the harsh environment to create modern day Canada.



Figure 10 (Blass 2010).

Overall, winter sport was placed within a dramatised story of Canada in the 2010 opening ceremony. As explained in my methodology, opening ceremonies are commonly used by Olympic organisers as an opportunity to showcase their host country. This dramatisation of the Canadian landscape highlights two things - the harsh environment and the passion of winter sports as a way of adapting to it. As a result they become a defining

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<sup>12</sup> A video of the opening ceremony available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxZpUueDAvc>

characteristic of the Canadian experience. Not only was it a necessary element of an opening ceremony which preceded two weeks of winter sport, but it was also a defining Canadian characteristic that could be ‘sold’ to the international and home audience. While it presented a romanticised idea of Canada which could persuade international viewers to visit, it also potentially made the Canadian viewers feel good too.

This is because the ceremony’s ‘Northern myth’ elements emphasised Canadian values such as endurance, adaptability and perseverance. Once a way of life for early Canadian settlers, today the ‘Northern myth’ takes on a more mental construction for Canadians. As Francis explains, “To a Canadian, North is an idea, not a location” and “has been central to our sense of ourselves” because it emphasises the Canadian values of adaptability, self-reliance, physical strength and perseverance which were once used to overcome the harsh landscape (1997: 154; Coleman 2006: 24). This relationship between Canadians, the land and winter sport was also visible in the images of hockey used in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Images of Olympic hockey featured in the bid books including one of the Canadian women’s gold medal team from the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics posing with their gold medals (figure 11) an Olympic hockey match (figure 12) and two Canadian hockey players (VBC 2003c: 49).

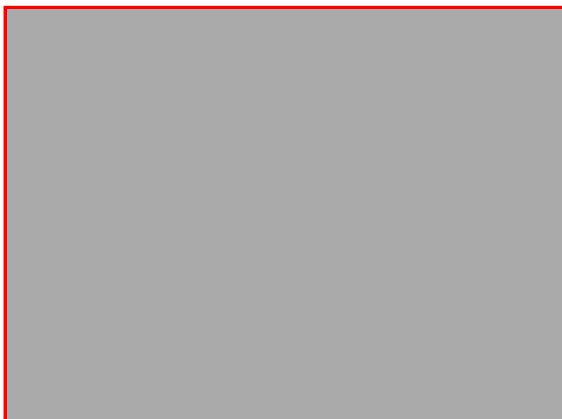


Figure 11 (VBC 2003c: 8).



Figure 12 (VBC 2003c: 2).

Images like figures 11 and 12 proliferated VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, and like the images of sport discussed earlier, they helped to reinforce the idea of Vancouver as a Winter Olympic city. Furthermore, they reemphasise that sport, in this case hockey, is celebrated by Canadians across the country. Other images, however, captured the symbolic nature of hockey in Canada and there were two in particular that are worthy of closer examination.

Appearing in the second volume of the bid books is an image of a lone child (presumably a white male) in a winter environment about to take a shot at the puck with his hockey stick (figure 13).

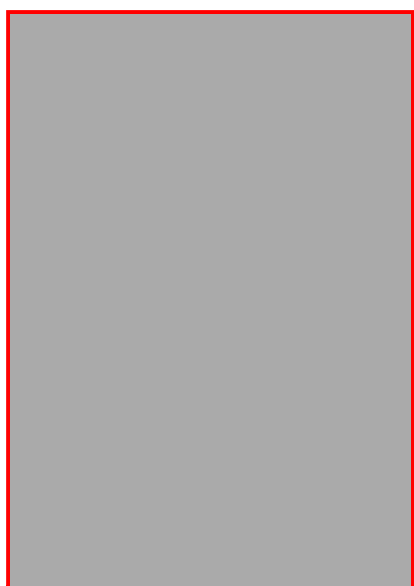


Figure 13 (VBC 2003c: 9).



This image brings to mind the comments made by Beamish and Carrier regarding the childhood connection to hockey and represents the romantic idea of Canadian children developing a close bond with the sport and its outdoor arena. This example is also strikingly similar to an image that appears in Ken Dryden and Roy MacGregor's book *Home Game: Hockey and Life in Canada* (1989) (In Earle 2002: 339). Neil Earle explains that to play hockey "on the rivers, ponds and frozen rinks that dot the icy landscape appears to be nothing less than a Canadian rite of passage" (2002: 339). This theme is continued in a hockey image that features in VANOC's promotional video *With Glowing Hearts* (figure 14). In the image we see an adult skating with his hockey stick across a large frozen lake amidst a wintry mountain environment:

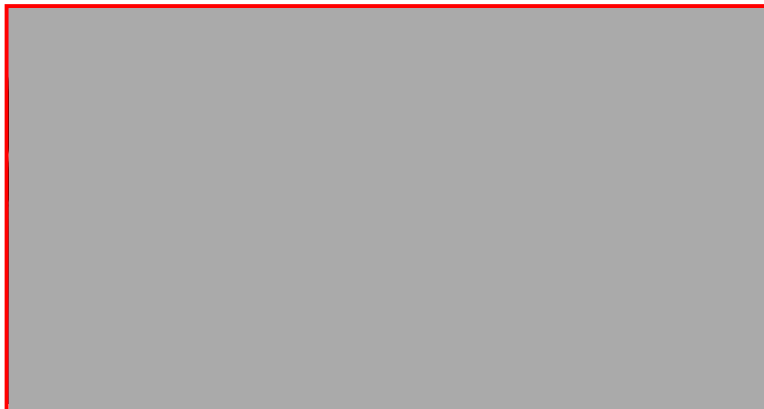


Figure 14 (VANOC 2008: 2.08-2.09).

For many Canadians hockey is seen as a Canadian invention and a game belonging to them (Gruneau and Whitson 1994: 3). The above two images illustrate how the close relationship between Canadians and hockey is ingrained from childhood into adulthood. Gruneau and Whitson describe how hockey has "a powerful grip in the imaginations and collective memories of Canadians because of its apparent naturalness" (1994: 3). Furthermore, this type of 'natural' representation of hockey's position in Canadian society and culture is part of the "story that Canadians tell themselves about what it means to be Canadian" (Gruneau and

Whitson 1994: 13). What makes hockey appear ‘natural’ is its connection to an integral feature of the Canadian story - the Canadian landscape.

Both of these images emphasise the outdoor, rugged arena where hockey is played which helps to romanticise hockey as a way that Canadians have adapted to Canada’s winter landscape. While figure 13 provides a small snapshot of a young boy in the Canadian outdoors, figure 14 showcases an adult travelling across a much larger expanse of land. Like Dryden and MacGregor’s image in *Home Game*, VANOC’s examples serve to evoke the truth north strong and free” (Earle 2002: 320). This concept is a key part of the ‘Northern myth’ that was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. It is the idea that Canadian virtues of adaptability, perseverance, and rigour enabled Canadian settlers to prosper in their northern winter surroundings and hockey is seen as one expression of this. While figure 13 shows a young Canadian at the outset of his intrepid journey to overcome his harsh winter surroundings through the medium of hockey, figure 14 illustrates a Canadian that has fully adapted to a northern mindset.

Figure 14 also showcases hockey’s romantic association with the Canadian landscape. While a rugged icy landscape and dark sky appears in figure 13, the scene in figure 14 is more serene. In this image the hockey player looks comfortable on the smooth ice and the dusk sky adds a romantic tinge to the scene. This image is also strikingly similar to another image of hockey used by Molson Canada (figure 15) to promote its beer during the 2010 Olympics and is analysed by Stephen Mock (2012: 218).



Figure 15 (Mock 2012: 218)

In his analysis of the image Mock explains its significance in the relationship between Canadians and the land. According to Mock, the advert's goal is to “evoke common experience, shared experiences” which in this case revolved around the Canadian landscape (2012: 218). The above image, like figure 14, is part of a sequence accompanied by a voiceover that educates the viewer about the importance of land to Canadians. In one such snippet the narrator ponders the following:

When you think about Canadians you might ask yourself, ‘why are we the way we are?’ Well the answer is laying right under our feet – literally. Fact is, it’s this land that shapes us (Mock 2012: 218)

Guided by the advert's narrator, images such as figure 15 help to reinforce the concept that “land is seen as formative of the national character” of Canadians (Mock 2012: 219). This is

because figures 14 and 15 illustrate the romantic notion of Canadians at one with the land that surrounds them as if it is a natural extension of their very character.

However, more recently the myth of hockey's natural relationship to the Canadian landscape has been challenged by some scholars, with Gruneau and Whitson in particular declaring it as increasingly artificial. They explain that "Hockey, like artificial ice, is not 'natural' at all" but "a human social and cultural product" that has been made by Canadians over time (2006: 2). Francis also supports this theory stating that the "myth of hockey is crumbling" as it loses "its connection to winter, to the North" (1997: 168-169). The two images above, however, only help to reinforce the connection between hockey and Canada's winter landscape and illustrate to the Olympic audience the sport as a natural part of Canadian life. This is just one element of the 'Northern myth' that can be extrapolated from these images.

Another comment that can be made is how the two images highlight the racist nature of the 'Northern myth.' The inherent implication of the 'Northern myth' is that those considered too weak to adapt to the harsh environment of Canada are left out. Coleman explains how "For early ideologues of the emerging Canadian nation, the country's northern location meant that it would remain the domain of upwardly mobile white people" (2006: 24). Francis similarly states that the 'Northern myth' was primarily characterised by the concept of "the master race" which was "used to secure the pre-eminence of Canada's British heritage while minimizing the role of other cultural groups" (1997: 173). Hockey also showcases similar racist and gendered attitudes.

Michael Robidoux, for example, argues that hockey has the ability to exclude on the basis of ethnicity and gender to be considered a strictly violent, white masculine sport (2002: 218-219). According to Robidoux, "hockey displayed men who were perceived to be stoic,

courageous, and physically dominant” (2002: 220) and provided “a popular site for males to define their worth as men” (2002: 222). Hockey’s masculine nature has also been criticised by Mary Louise Adams who claims that “If Hockey is life in Canada, then life in Canada remains decidedly masculine” (Adams 2006: 71). Whitson and Gruneau meanwhile explain how:

The myth of hockey as a ‘natural adaption to ice, snow and open space’ is a particularly graphic example of what Barthes is alerting us to – about how history can be confused with nature... This discourse of nature creates a kind of cultural amnesia about the social struggles and vested interests between men and women, social classes, regions, races and ethnic groups (1994: 132)

In a later study they go further to explain how hockey has been used for “teaching boys the masculine virtues of the time: strength, toughness, quiet fortitude, and fraternal loyalty” (2006: 2).

Whether the images above showcase this white, masculine interpretation of hockey is unclear as the identities of the players are not obvious. However, like the mythologisation of hockey elsewhere, I believe that these two images hint at a sport which transcends gender and ethnic boundaries to become a universal symbol to be embraced by everyone. Another image that more clearly displays this white masculine identity, however, is a screenshot taken from the closing ceremony which celebrated various common associations of popular Canadian culture (figure 16).



Figure 16 (Fralic 2010b).

The image is dominated by huge red and white cardboard cut-out hockey players and Mounties juxtaposed next to their smaller, real-life counterparts. All of the figures are white Canadian males who exhibit a stern or competitive pose while the hockey players are also clad in the Canadian flag colours with gold medals around their necks. These figures epitomise the type of representation that hockey has been criticised for having by scholars like Adams, Robidoux, and Whitson and Gruneau. Here there is no doubt that hockey is a white, male sport. However, it is important to note that the scene was part of a closing ceremony which was openly described by Furlong as an attempt to poke a bit of fun about common (mis)conceptions regarding Canada's image both abroad and at home (2011: 296). Even so, they still provide a stark contrast to figures 13 and 14 which showcase a more universal image of hockey that has the ability to transcend ethnic and gender boundaries.

Overall, hockey was the most frequently shown winter sport in the VBC and VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. The sport is celebrated in the campaign as one of Canada's Olympic achievements and an important sport to the

Canadian public. This is done by including images of Canadian Olympic hockey players, everyday Canadians playing, and recreating hockey dramatically by staging games in the handover, opening and closing ceremonies. The overall effect of these images of hockey creates a romantic and mythological representation of the sport's role in shaping Canadian society and culture. While VANOC's images of cheering crowds emphasised a narrative that showcased Canadian passion for winter sport, hockey was depicted as a national characteristic of what it means to be Canadian through its romanticised images.

All of the images of sport, however, highlight a one-sided, mythological view of the participatory nature of Canadians sports fans. What these images do not address is the issue of inclusion in Olympic Games. The images used by the VBC and VANOC imply a high level of Canadian participation in the Olympics. However, most Canadians could not afford to attend the events because of the high ticket costs and limited availability. We saw this in chapter three of this dissertation where I outlined the struggles faced by residents of Vancouver's DTES as a result of the 2010 Olympics.

Overall, these images contributed towards a mythical and romanticised narrative of the relationship between winter sports, hockey and Canadians. They performed in line with the representation of winter sport and hockey that Metcalfe, Blake, Beamish and Carrier, amongst others, discuss in the first part of this chapter. The reasons for promoting this narrative are arguably to do with ambitions to increase tourism and foster the 'feel good' factor amongst the Canadian public. Clearly images of urban poverty were not going to be used as unique selling points by VANOC as these would not have been appealing to the intended audiences.

Another romanticised and mythologised narrative in VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign centres around Canada's Aboriginal heritage. This narrative misappropriated and appropriated Canada's Aboriginal heritage to present a diverse but

socially harmonious view of Canadian society. Like the narrative of winter sports, this narrative romanticised and mythologised images to appeal to the international and home audience. While an emphasis of Aboriginal culture gave Canada a uniqueness that might have appealed to tourists, the narrative of cooperation and social harmony made the Canadian public feel good about their relationship with their Aboriginal neighbours. There are two further comparisons that can be made between these two narratives.

Firstly, the role of the Canadian landscape applies to both narratives. In the first narrative land appears as the arena for Canadians to play out their passion for winter sports. On a more symbolic level, winter sports is representative of the way Canadians have adapted to their harsh winter surroundings. I explored this idea in my analysis of how the myths of the North and hockey functioned in VANOC's images of winter sport. In the case of the second narrative, the theme of the Canadian landscape is less salient. In the images of Canada's Aboriginal heritage that I discuss in the next chapter, land rarely appears. Instead, Aboriginal culture is isolated from the Canadian landscape and inserted into VANOC's own representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage. This is controversial when you consider that the 2010 Games were the first Olympics to formally recognise a host's Aboriginal society as official co-hosts. It is also made more complicated when you become aware of the importance of land to Canadian Aboriginal communities and their continued struggle in land claim cases.

The second comparison that can be made between the two narratives is that they both exclude along racial lines to showcase white-masculine Canada. While the winter sport narrative's connection to the 'Northern myth' highlights white-masculine Canadian values, in the second narrative the Aboriginal population is either separated from mainstream Canadian society or is completely submerged so it is no longer visible. When Aboriginal culture does appear it is used to market Canada as a unique destination or is trivialised to sell merchandise.



The next chapter will investigate in more detail VANOC's images of Canada's Aboriginal heritage.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ABORIGINAL NARRATIVES AT THE 2010 OLYMPICS:**

At the 2010 Olympic opening ceremony on February 12th, the FHFN chiefs were recognised as official heads of state when they sat alongside other Canadian, IOC and VANOC dignitaries. National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Shawn Atleo, believed this moment was indicative of an increasing level of Aboriginal reconciliation with the rest of Canada (Pemberton 2010b: A11). Atleo praised it as a signal that Canadian aboriginals were “returning to their rightful place” in Canada and defined the 2010 Olympics as a “moment where we are carving out a place for ourselves in this country” (Pemberton 2010b: A11). This mood also characterised the response from other Canadian Aboriginals regarding their part in the 2010 Olympics (Pemberton 2010a: A19; Penner 2010: B9).

In addition to recognising the FHFN as official host partners, VANOC produced a visual representation of Canada’s heterogeneous Aboriginal population in their brand identity and marketing campaign. However, a narrative which misrepresented and appropriated Canada’s Aboriginal heritage was prevalent in several features of VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. This chapter analyses some of the romanticised and mythologised images that VANOC used to construct this portrayal of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage. Furthermore, it proposes that values of diversity and tolerance were over-emphasised in order to create the impression of a socially harmonious relationship between Canadians and their fellow Aboriginal citizens.

To contextualise my examination of VANOC’s Aboriginal narrative this chapter outlines the past economic, social and cultural assimilation of Canada’s Aboriginal population, with particular reference to the 2010 Olympic host region B.C. It then summarises the changes in societal attitudes towards Canada’s Aboriginal population and the various

political struggles that occurred in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. This background provides a crucial context to my analysis of the images of Canada's Aboriginal heritage discussed in the second part of this chapter.

I argue that VANOC's images were consistent with a long pattern in Canada of misrepresenting and romanticising Aboriginal people and their culture. They did this by presenting an historical, romanticised and mythologised portrayal of Canadian Aboriginal society and culture. This was comparable to how Canadian Aboriginals had been portrayed by non-Aboriginal artists, tourist promoters and museum curators who followed the 'Vanishing Indian' paradigm in the twentieth century. This was the supposition that as Aboriginal people were assimilated into white-Canadian society their traditional culture was disappearing.

Also part of this paradigm was the appropriation of Aboriginal cultural artefacts by curators for museum displays. While VANOC did not physically appropriate Aboriginal cultural objects they adopted them symbolically into their own 2010 Olympic brand identity. The best examples of this were VANOC's use of mythical Aboriginal animals for their Olympic mascots and the adoption of the Inuit marker stone, known as an inuksuit, for the 2010 Olympic logo. The latter example attracted criticism for its appropriation of an Aboriginal culture not native to the host region of B.C.

The end product of the images VANOC used was a romanticised and mythologised narrative of Canadian Aboriginal culture and society. I suggest that this romanticisation was quintessential to enticing tourism, fostering good feeling amongst Canadians and reassuring the public that the relationship between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Canadians was untroubled. However, in the process it silenced Canada's controversial colonial history and covered up the social injustices that Aboriginal communities continue to face today. However, presenting a more negative view of Canada's Aboriginal heritage may have deterred those

who attended or watched the event at home from visiting as a tourist. Furthermore, this type of representation would have been an unwelcome contrast to the general theme of celebrating achievement and inspiring others that is often the focus of the Olympic Games. This chapter concludes by briefly comparing VANOC's images of Canada's Aboriginal heritage to examples from the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C.'s (ATBC) website. By doing this I endeavour to enhance my critical analysis of VANOC's representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage.

### **Canada's Aboriginal Heritage from Colonisation to the 2010 Olympics**

The experience of Canada's Aboriginal population during contact with European explorers "differed from region to region" (Friesen 1999: 52) and is discussed by a variety of scholars (Dickason 1992; Fisher 1980; Miller 2001; Trigger 1985). Whilst first encounters with Aboriginal peoples in Eastern Canada date back to the late fifteenth century (Trigger 1985: 118) in B.C. the earliest recorded meeting occurred in July 1774 between Spanish navigator Juan Perez and the Haida people of Langara Island (Fisher 1980: 1). On the whole, however, the contact period across Canada was characterised by the same phases, except in B.C. they occurred in a shorter timeframe (Friesen 1999: 52; Miller 1991: 136).

In the first period of contact, known as the maritime and land-based fur trade, furs and knowledge were exchanged between Europeans and Aboriginal tribes. In B.C. the maritime fur trade peaked between 1792 and 1812 while the land-based fur trade prospered until the 1850s (Fisher 1980: 3; 95). Whilst there were some altercations between Europeans and Aboriginal people during this time, on the whole their relationship was fairly harmonious. During this era, "Indians were not passive objects of exploitation" but in many cases

“vigorously asserted their demands” (Fisher 1980: 4).

By the mid-nineteenth century, however, this relationship transformed dramatically as Aboriginal people “increasingly assumed the roles of obstacle to development and consumer of public funds” once Europeans sought permanent settlement (Miller 1991: 98). British settlement accelerated once the Crown colony of B.C. was established in 1858 (Fisher 1980: 96; Harris 2002: 3). What followed was a change in British attitude towards Aboriginal people where they were “reduced from an integral to a peripheral role in British Columbia’s economy” which eventually led to “the corrosion of traditional Indian cultures” (Fisher 1980: 210). This is a process which occurred across Canada in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Outside of B.C., Canadian Aboriginal people had come under state rule in 1867 with the British North America Act and were subsequently moved onto reserves (Barman 1996: 160). Reserves were established areas of land where Aboriginal tribes were confined and subject to state law formalised under the Indian Acts of 1869, 1876 and 1880.<sup>13</sup> These Acts established the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) which was given the responsibility of civilising Aboriginal people through educational, cultural and societal means (Barman 1996: 154). Alongside the DIA, missionaries operated as self-professed “agents of a superior civilization” (Miller 1991: 52) in their own attempt to assimilate Aboriginal people into white society and destroy their “traditional integrated Indian way of life” (Fisher 1980: 145).

Missionaries had been present in B.C. before substantial settlement by the British took place but they had struggled in their bid to change Aboriginal society (Fisher 1980: 119). Fisher argues that this was partly due to poor organisation on part of the missionaries but also due to a lack of impetus for Aboriginal people to adopt Christianity (1980: 124). However,

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<sup>13</sup> For a detailed history of the B.C. reserve policy see Harris, Cole 2002. *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

the establishment of reserves significantly disrupted traditional Aboriginal ways of life and subsequently saw an increasing responsiveness amongst the population towards missionaries (Fisher 1980: 124). Whilst the missionaries' methods may have differed compared to those of the British Crown, and later the B.C. government, the ultimate aim remained the same – the eradication of traditional Aboriginal culture (Fisher 1980: 142). Both groups shared similar attitudes towards Aboriginal society and culture in the nineteenth century which had a dramatic effect on the lives of Aboriginal people and their succeeding generations.

The Indian Act in particular was responsible for the legislation that sought to diminish a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle which settlers believed to be dying out (Fisher 1980: 142). It “treated Native people as minors incapable of looking after their own interests and in need of the protection of the state” (Francis 1992: 202). In 1986 Chief Joe Mathias said that “The Indian Act of 1876 shattered the lives of the aboriginal people of Canada” (Crey 1991: 150). There were several ways that Canada's Indian policy of assimilation had this devastating impact upon Aboriginal life.

Firstly, along with the loss of ancestral lands, the policy of residential schools had a dramatic effect on Canada's Aboriginal population. The residential school policy was introduced by churches and the DIA in the 1840s as part of a larger effort to anglicise and assimilate Aboriginal children through education. Ultimately, however, the residential school policy signalled the state's desire “to destroy the structure and significance of family” that was highly valued by Aboriginal tribes across Canada (George 1991: 168). According to Chief of the Burrard band Leonard George, “The removal of children from their homes and villages was the single most destructive action taken by government” (1991: 168) because “Families were separated, life skills lost, and family units dismantled” (1991: 166).

Sadly, the history of residential schools is blighted with stories of severe child abuse and in some cases death (Furniss 1995; Haig-Brown 1988; Milloy 1999). Residential schools were notorious as “North America’s first ghettos, with poverty, disease and abuse rampant” (George 1991: 167) and the policy was not completely abandoned until the 1980s when the last school closed down. It was not until 1998, and later in 2008, that the Canadian government formally apologised for its murky role in the assimilation of Aboriginal children.<sup>14</sup>

The second measure taken by the state to assimilate its Aboriginal population involved the banning of Aboriginal cultural traditions. The most notable example was the banning of the potlatch ceremony in the Indian Act of 1884. Potlatch ceremonies were an integral feature of Pacific West-Coast Aboriginal life and were held to “confirm or assert status... commemorate important events in the life cycle” and involved the exchange of valuable items between tribes including “blankets, canoes and ‘coppers’” (Barman 1996: 160). Shirley Joseph describes how they embody “the cultural, social, political, economic, legal, spiritual, ceremonial and educational tenets of the tribes” (1991: 68) while Joe Mathias and Gary Yabsley (1991) explain how the Potlatch ceremony “reinforces the value systems upon which Indian societies have defined themselves for centuries” (1991: 37). The federal and provincial governments, however, regarded the Potlatch ceremony with disdain and saw them as immoral, materialistic events which went against the grain of “Victorian standards of sobriety and thrift” (Barman 1996: 160). Those who continued to hold potlatch ceremonies were often arrested (Barman 1996: 160) and by 1895 the law was extended to include “all festivals, dances and ceremonies that involved the giving away of money or goods, or the wounding of

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<sup>14</sup> For the full apology from 1998:

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015725/1100100015726>

For the full apology from 2008:

<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2008/06/11/pm-offers-full-apology-behalf-canadians-indian-residential-schools-system>

humans or animals” (Backhouse 1999: 63).

Another culturally devastating impact on Aboriginal people was the theft of their traditional artefacts, artwork and totem poles which took place alongside a decline in Aboriginal population. In 1881 the estimated Aboriginal population of Canada was 108,500 while in 1915 it had decreased to 103,700 (Francis 1992: 54). In B.C. meanwhile, the Aboriginal population declined to approximately 25,000 in 1880 and by 1891 it only counted for a third of the total B.C. population (Fisher 1980: 201). This population decline accompanied the paradigm of the ‘Vanishing Indian’ which took hold of the non-Aboriginal imagination in the late nineteenth century (Francis 1992; Douglas 2000).

The ‘Vanishing Indian’ was the concept that “Aboriginal cultures existed only in the past, that Aboriginal peoples ceased to be ‘authentic’ as soon as they altered their way of life” or “adapted to, non-Aboriginal ways” (Douglas 2000: 151). Daniel Francis explains how:

Some believed that it was the Indian’s traditional culture that was being eradicated by the spread of white settlement, while others believed the Indians themselves literally to be dying out. Some found the idea appalling; some found it regrettable; some found it desirable. But all were agreed that the Indian was doomed (1992: 23).

Canadian museum curators took advantage of this view, participating in a ‘Museum scramble’ (Cole 1995) whereby they travelled across Canada “to buy, barter and in some cases steal” Aboriginal artefacts (Francis 1992: 104). Francis describes this process as rather ironic and argues that whilst “Having first of all destroyed many aspects of Native culture, White society now turned around and admired its own recreations of what it had destroyed” (1992: 36).



Overall, Canada's assimilation policy had been described as "a dismal failure" (McMillan 1995: 339). Cole Harris argues that in B.C. regardless of the "intensity and duration of the campaign to eradicate Nativeness, its achievements have been meagre" (Harris 2002: 298). Despite claims that the Aboriginal community and culture was becoming extinct, population figures rose and the number of people who recognise themselves as Aboriginal continues to grow (Harris 2002: 298). Regardless of whether the assimilationist policies were a success or not, the devastating effect of almost a century of the Indian Act is not to be ignored.

In the case of B.C. there are several problems that some Aboriginal communities face. By 1991, the total Aboriginal population in B.C. had returned to levels that existed on first contact with Europeans, numbering some 100,000 (Barman 1996: 337). However, 44 per cent were below the poverty line compared to provincial average of 15 per cent, infant mortality was almost double the average, alcohol and drug related deaths were three to five times greater and suicide rates amongst the 16-24 age group were six times higher (Barman 1996: 338-339).

The improvement of state policy regarding Aboriginal Canadians also continues to be a long and arduous journey. It was not until after the Second World War that federal and provincial governments' attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples began to change for the better (Dickason 1997: 304). One of the first to represent this change was UBC's Museum of Anthropology director Harry Hawthorne, whose report in 1966 provided Canadians with a new insight into their fellow Aboriginal citizens (Dickason 1997: 362). Hawthorne's report, *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada*, gave an in-depth background into Canada's Aboriginal population and provided 91 recommendations for improving their economic, social and cultural position (1966: 12-20). Central to these recommendations was

Hawthorne's belief that it was vital "The Indian Affairs Branch should act as a national conscience to see that social and economic equality is achieved between Indians and Whites" (1966: 13).

The federal government's response to Hawthorne's report followed in the form of the White Paper of 1969, which was largely rejected by Canada's Aboriginal population. The White Paper proposed dispensing of Aboriginal special status which according to the government had made "Indians a community disadvantaged and apart" (1969: 2). By removing this status it would allow their Aboriginal population to become "free" which would in turn allow them to "develop Indian cultures in an environment of legal, social and economic equality with other Canadians" (1969: 2). This was outrageous to many Aboriginal people because it implied that the various problems that plagued their communities "were not attributable to insensitive government policies or generations of racial prejudice" (Miller 2000: 331). Ultimately, the White Paper of 1969 never advanced to Green paper status and the issue of Aboriginal rights was not seriously discussed by the government again until the constitutional changes of 1982.

As part of larger amendments to the Canadian Constitution in 1982, the category of Aboriginal people in Canada was redefined under section 35 to include Indian, Inuit and Métis. According to Alan Cairns, this change "increased the officially recognised self-identifying Aboriginal population to about seven times the number of status Indians in pre-World War Two years" (2001: 69). The debate about Aboriginal rights continued into the 1990s with the Charlottetown Accord of 1992 which "proposed extensive changes in the relationship of Aboriginal peoples to the constitutional order" (Cairns 2001: 81).

If it had been successful, the Charlottetown Accord would have given Aboriginal people the inherent right of self-government along with separate Aboriginal representation in

the House of Commons and the Senate (Cairns 2001: 81-82). Most importantly, it acknowledged that “the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, being the first peoples to govern this land, have the right to promote their languages, cultures and traditions and to ensure the integrity of their societies” (Miller 2000: 378). Despite this, however, the Charlottetown Accord failed to garner enough public support “including most of the Native community” (Miller 2000: 378).

As well as attempting to make amends for the lack of Aboriginal self-government, the Canadian government has also moved towards reconciliation over the social oppression of Aboriginal people. Particularly indicative of this change in attitude were the national apologies delivered by the federal government over the residential school policy. The first heartfelt apology was presented by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Jane Stewart in 1998 which took accountability for the damage and abuse inflicted on Aboriginal society (Canada 1998). Whilst the statement was well-received by many Aboriginal people, Prime Minister of the time Jean Chretien was criticised for not being present (Speirs 1998: A15).

Ten years later, Prime Minister Stephen Harper would rectify this mistake by personally apologising to the nation live on television (Tomlinson 2008: A5). In his statement Harper recognised the “damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language” as a result of the residential school policy (Canada 2008). However, the response to Harper’s apology was mixed with many journalists reporting on the waves of silence amongst the Aboriginal audiences that followed his broadcast (Gray 2008) while some Aboriginal people strongly felt that the apology had come too late (Walton 2008: A4).

Another significant issue is the vast number of land claims cases across Canada. As we saw earlier, the majority of Canada’s Aboriginal population had lost their right to their ancestral lands during the colonisation of Canada. In 1973, Frank Calder, the hereditary chief

of the Nisga'a based in the Nass Valley contested his band's ancestral land title with the Supreme Court of Canada. After a lengthy court case and several appeals, the Supreme Court of Canada eventually "recognised Aboriginal title as an established legal right in Canadian law" in 1984 (McKee 2000: 28). Despite the constitutional changes of 1982 and the land claim process implanted as a result of the Calder Case, the federal and B.C. government were slow to recognise Aboriginal land title.

There were also multiple incidents of disagreement between government and Aboriginal people, one of the most notable being the Oka crisis of 1990. After the Oka golf course proposed extending its site in July 1990, members of the Kaneshatke Mohawk who lived nearby, staged a land occupation which lasted several months, led to army intervention and resulted in the death of a policeman (Dickason 1997: 321; Miller 2000: 380). Other similar incidents occurred in Ipperwash and Gustafsen where Aboriginal people occupied land in protest against non-native businesses and organisations (Dickason 1997: 400-401). The last example took place in B.C., a province synonymous with the struggle for Aboriginal land title.

Unlike the rest of Canada, the majority of B.C. land had not been subject to land treaties following colonisation (Dickason 1997: 329). Instead, the B.C. government "denied having any outstanding obligations that could be settled by way of land claims" (Dickason 1997: 401). This attitude was reflected in March 1991 when, after a four year court case and over 100 witness statements illustrating their oral history, Justice Allan McEachern rejected a claim by the Gitksan Nation and Wet'suwet'en Nations over 58,000 square kilometres of land in north-western B.C. (McKee 2000: 31). He "denied the existence of Aboriginal rights of ownership and jurisdiction" on the grounds that the crown had extinguished any right prior to confederation (Dickason 1997: 330).

It was not until December 1997 that the Supreme Court of Canada repealed McEachern's decision and recognised the validity of oral history and land title. As Paul Rynard explains, the 1997 decision re-stipulated that Aboriginal title existed in Canadian law "as a real common law right to property which encompassed full ownership of lands and natural resources" (Rynard 2000: 220). Alongside this landmark decision, a change in B.C. government also led to a more positive stance towards Aboriginal title.

With the election of the NDP party in 1992, promises were made to attempt to resolve outstanding land claims cases (Dickason 1997: 401). This promise succeeded a report by the B.C. Claims Task Force, published on June 28th 1991, which encouraged a change in B.C. government policy regarding Aboriginal title. The Task Force stated that "A new relationship which recognises the unique place of Aboriginal people and First Nations in Canada must be developed" and an acknowledgement that they were "distinct nations with their own spiritual values, histories, languages, territories, political institutions and ways of life" should be its "hallmark" (BC Task Force 1991: 7). The Task Force also recommended that an independent body, known as the BC Treaty Commission, was set up to monitor the progress of land claims.

Today, more attention is placed on the urgency of land claim cases in B.C. both by the BC Treaty Commission and the provincial ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation (ARR). In a statement on their website, the ARR outlines the importance of treaty negotiations and agreements in order to "create economic certainty over Crown land and resources to improve the lives of First Nations" (2014a). Currently, the ARR state that there are three agreements waiting to be ratified (2014b) whilst there are 36 "agreements in principle" which amongst them include three of the FHFN, the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (2014c). The issue of Aboriginal land title was also brought to the fore with

the 2010 Winter Olympics.

As previously outlined in chapter one, VANOC commenced a partnership with the FHFN in hosting the 2010 Olympics which was agreed in the November 2004 Protocol. This was significant because the land on which the event took place was also home to the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh and Lil'wat and at the time was still not privy to any land treaty. The agreement determined "The establishment of a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with VANOC" (O'Bonsawin 2006: 388). Poole described that by formalising their partnership with the FHFN, VANOC had illustrated the importance of "respecting the role of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in the planning, staging and hosting of the 2010 Games" (O'Bonsawin 2006: 388).

One could view the 2010 Olympics as a significant moment in the history of Canada's Aboriginal people because it was a chance to make amends for previous mistakes and repair their relationship. The aim of this dissertation, however, is not to analyse the relationship between VANOC and the FHFN as other scholars have already done this (Devitt 2010; Kloepper 2011; Silver, Meletis and Vadi 2012; Sidsworth 2010). Instead, this chapter will analyse how a romanticised and mythologised narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage was represented in VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. It argues that VANOC appropriated and misrepresented Aboriginal culture and society in order to produce a harmonious narrative. Whilst the event may have been unique for its recognition of the FHFN as official host partners, its representation of their culture and society was far from ground-breaking. This chapter will now analyse how VANOC's images of Aboriginal culture and society were romanticised and mythologised.

### **The VBC's Promotion of Canada's Aboriginal Heritage**

During the bid period, the promotion of Canada's Aboriginal heritage was particularly scant with a total of only eight images in the bid books and promotional video. What is most striking about the images was the lack of Aboriginal people. Instead, Canada's Aboriginal heritage was largely represented through cultural and historical traditions including a mask (figure 17; VBC 2003a: 0.54) an Aboriginal building (VBC 2003a: 0.53) and a totem pole (figure 18; figure 19).



Figure 17 (VBC 2003d: 128).



Figure 18 (VBC 2003b: 2).



Figure 19 (VBC 2003d: 132).

The images shown above hark back to the myth of the ‘Vanishing Indian.’ Images of totem poles and other Aboriginal objects, such as masks, were popular subjects of early twentieth century painters like Emily Carr, Paul Kane and Edmund Morris and there was no Aboriginal human presence in many of their paintings (Francis 1992: 24). Furthermore, figures 17 and 19 display a fierce, unwelcoming character and their true meaning is unknown because they have been taken out of their original Aboriginal context and inserted into the bid books without explanation by the authors. Simply put, they are not ideal images to showcase any Aboriginal partnership as the people themselves are not present. Instead, the images serve a better purpose as signs to the international audience of Canada’s unique Aboriginal history.

The only images from the VBC bid campaign to feature Aboriginal people included a scene in the bid video showing a male carpenter working in his shed on an artefact (VBC 2003a: 0.50) and another illustrating an Aboriginal ceremonial dance (VBC 2003a: 0.49). This latter image is an example of another stereotypical way that Canada’s Aboriginal heritage has been represented by non-Aboriginals in the twentieth century – the ‘Performing Indian.’ According to Daniel Francis, the ‘Performing Indian’ was especially prolific at fairs and exhibitions throughout the twentieth century and was considered “a tame Indian” because he “had lost the power to frighten anyone” and instead entertained the public with traditional



Aboriginal dance (Francis 1992: 102). This concept of the ‘Performing Indian,’ and how it is present in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, will be discussed in further detail later on in this chapter when I look at Aboriginal representation in the opening ceremony.

Overall, the VBC’s promotion of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage in these images is indicative of just some of the ways that Aboriginal people and their culture have been represented since the early twentieth century. Both the ‘Vanishing Indian’ and the ‘Performing Indian’ involve a misrepresentation and appropriation of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage which also occurred in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. VANOC’s images of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage helped produce not only a narrative of embracing this heritage but also promoting a narrative of social harmony. The rest of this chapter will now attempt to justify this argument.

### **The 2010 Olympic Logo and Mascots**

During VANOC’s preparation for the 2010 Olympics images of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage increased exponentially. The first key example of this was the 2010 Olympic logo which was announced during a one-hour CTV special on April 23rd, 2005. Instead of choosing a symbol which represented the west-coast Aboriginal culture of the FHFN, VANOC chose a popular Inuit cultural symbol known as an inuksuk.<sup>15</sup> Inuksuit are structures composed of strategically placed stones which form statue figures and have traditionally been used by Aboriginal people of the Canadian Arctic, in particular the Inuit (Heyes 2002: 134). Scott Heyes explains how they were traditionally used as “reliable message centres” to

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<sup>15</sup> The spelling of inuksuk varies with some scholars using the English spelling, inukshuk’ but for the purposes of this dissertation I will use the former. Inuksuit’ is used when referring to the plural (Heyes 2002: 134).

provide hunters with markers for good hunting and fishing areas as well as other important messages. According to Heyes, inuksuit are also symbolic objects of “veneration” which are “embedded in the roots of Inuit society” (2002: 134). The contemporary use of inuksuit, however, is very different.

Jeffery Ruhl discusses how inuksuit have been used to brand Canada domestically and abroad since 2000. Amongst the examples he discusses are the 25-cent quarter and 47-cent stamp in 2000 as well as the 50-cent stamp which was produced to commemorate Canada at Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan (Ruhl 2008: 27). The focal point of the stamp was an inuksuk composed of five differently coloured and sized stones similar to the design that VANOC would later adopt for their 2010 Olympic logo. There are several ways that the incorporation of an inuksuk on the stamp contributed to branding Canada.

Firstly, according to Canada Post the stamp was meant to “symbolize man’s non-destructive imprint on nature” (Ruhl 2008: 27). Secondly, the use of an inuksuk on the stamp made it “a national symbol in its own right” and “replaced the primacy of the maple leaf” (Ruhl 2008: 27). Thirdly, Ruhl believes the Expo 2005 commemorative stamp “was a symbol connected to Canada’s image abroad” (2008: 27). In summary, Ruhl believed that the inuksuk had gone from being “a simple message carrier to somewhat of a moral compass, giving ‘us’ our bearings” and “showing Canadians the way” by highlighting Canadian values of “openness, tolerance, respect and fellowship” (2008: 28). The inuksuk symbol was also used to “teach Canadian children about Canadian values” as part of an activity guide used in citizenship education.

Inuksuk statue figures were also constructed and placed in locations across Canada. An example of one of the many inuksuk statues is located at English Bay in Vancouver and is a popular tourist attraction and photo opportunity. An image of the English Bay inuksuk

appears in volume three of the VBC's Bid Book (figure 20). Alongside the image VBC describe how the inuksuk "is a rock cairn often shaped in the form of a human which helps guide the Inuit people across the land, guaranteeing their way towards safe haven" (VBC 2003d: 130).



Figure 20 (VBC 2003d: 130).

VANOC's interpretation of an inuksuk was created by Vancouver resident Elena Rivera whose winning design was submitted as part of a competition to find the 2010 Olympic logo (figure 21):

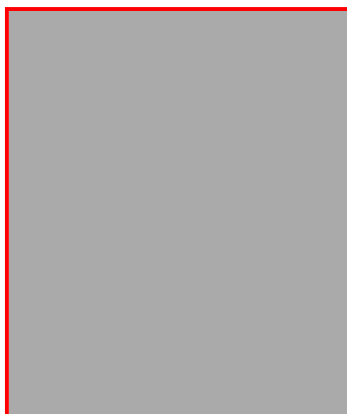


Figure 21 (VANOC 2008b: i)

Whilst many 2010 Olympic viewers may have recognised the logo as an Inuit symbol, they would most likely not been able to tell us much more than that. According to VANOC, the structure and colours of the logo were purposely chosen to represent “Canada’s rich natural and cultural diversity” (VANOC 2008b: 13). Whilst the rock formations represented the diversity of Canada’s landscape the colours also had their own significance. VANOC explained the meanings behind the chosen colours (also the colours of the Olympic rings) in the following passage taken from their published document *Your Guide to the 2010 Olympics* (2008b):

Its colours reflect both Canada and the host region; the blue sea, sky and Coast Mountains; the green forests; the red maple leaf; and the golden sunrises that paint the city skyline and the snow-capped peaks from Vancouver to Whistler (VANOC 2008b: 13)

While the colours are meant to reflect the visual diversity of the Canadian landscape, the logo’s structure for VANOC is representative of the teamwork of the Olympic athletes and organisers. VANOC explain how “Each stone relies on the other to support the whole” and “the unified structure is strong and unwavering” (VANOC 2008b: 13). The only reference to the indigeneity of the logo is in VANOC’s explanation of the historical significance of inuksuit to the Inuit people. There is no indication that the logo was chosen to represent Canada’s Aboriginal heritage.

Instead, the logo was chosen for its potential to promote the 2010 Olympics as Canada’s games (Inwood 2005a: A2) and become a “new Canadian icon” (Furlong 2011: 140). This was because VANOC believed that the logo represented the collaborative and

welcoming nature of Canadians. According to Furlong, the logo was “a team player” which contained the “strength, vision and teamwork” to point “Canada in the direction of excellence” with its hosting of the 2010 Olympics (Terry 2005: F1). In this sense, the logo was indicative of “the creation of a group of people working towards one goal, hoping to serve others with their legacy” (VANOC 2008b: 13). VANOC spokeswoman Renee Smith-Valade further explained how the logo was chosen as “a strong, unique, distinctive symbol that’s truly representative of Canada” (Inwood 2005b: A6). VANOC insisted that the logo represented Canada and B.C. because inuksuit were found throughout Canada (Armstrong 2005: A1). In addition to teamwork, VANOC believed the logo was representative of a welcoming nation.

According to VANOC, inuksuit have “become a symbol of hope and friendship” which demonstrates the “eternal expression of the hospitality of a nation that opens its arms to the world’s people every day” (2008b: 13). Thus, for VANOC the logo offered “the welcome of a nation” (2008b: 13) and became one of the most prominent symbols of the 2010 Olympics. VANOC also chose the logo because they felt it was the best example to help foster the ‘feel-good’ factor amongst the Canadian audience because it “evoked Canadian values” and “connected to every Canadian” across the country (Armstrong 2005: A1). Ruhl also describes how the Aboriginal symbol reflected Canadian characteristics and values such as “hospitality, tolerance, and diversity” (2008: 30).

Ruhl believes that the genderless and silent inuksuk is the “ideal logo” for a vast and diverse country like Canada that has struggled to “articulate a unified sense of national identity” (2008: 26). Furthermore, “it is devoid of the latent or overt national/political symbolism associated with other national symbols like the maple leaf, and therefore becomes an ideal logo to promote ‘Canada’” and the 2010 Olympics (Ruhl 2008: 29). Thus, in this

sense it is understandable why VANOC chose it as the 2010 Olympic logo. However, given VANOC's explanation for why they selected the logo, what it was intended to represent and the lack of reference to Aboriginal culture, it was not surprising that it garnered much negative reaction from Canadian Aboriginal people.

The lack of its cultural relevance to the Aboriginal groups of B.C. in particular, characterised the general media and public response to the logo. A survey conducted by Mustel Group Market Research in May 2005 found that out of the B.C. adults polled, 39 per cent disliked the 2010 Olympic logo while 51 per cent believed the logo should have represented B.C. (Mustel 2005). Amongst those who personally commented on the logo was another entrant in the competition to design the 2010 Olympic logo. North Vancouver resident Mihtla questioned why VANOC needed to borrow the culture of a Aboriginal community far removed from Vancouver when they could have focused on the "strong art" of the West Coast (Inwood 2005b: A6).

Meanwhile, Aboriginal scholar Christine O'Bonsawin claimed the logo was unrepresentative of the FHFN and the 2010 Olympics because its design originated from Northern Canadian Inuit culture (2006: 391-392). Patrick Witwicki also described how the chosen logo was a lost opportunity to "showcase to the world a piece of the West Coast" (2005: 6) while Leader of the First Nations Summit, Chief Edward John, described it as "a poke in the eye to first nations people and first nations artists" (Armstrong 2005: C1). Furthermore, he asserted that if the Games were at Yellowknife, the use of West Coast totem poles would have provoked a similar response from the Aboriginal community there (Armstrong 2005: C1). This latter comment also hinted at the cultural appropriation of Inuit Aboriginal culture by VANOC in their mission to create a new Canadian icon.

There was much debate about how VANOC appropriated Canadian Aboriginal culture with its 2010 Olympic logo. O'Bonsawin believed that the logo was an offensive appropriation of Inuit culture and VANOC's utilisation of an inuksuk "dishonoured the traditional and contemporary function(s) of the symbol for First Nations" (2006: 389). The cultural appropriation of Canadian Aboriginal culture is not unique to VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. Loretta Todd explains that "appropriation occurs when someone else speaks for, tells, defines, describes, represents, uses or recruits the images, stories, experiences, dreams of others for their own" (Todd in Blundell 1993: 72). Similarly, Marc Denhez (1990) delineates how appropriation involves "taking signs which point in one direction and somehow intervening to reverse their meaning" to cater for the interest of "dominant social groups" (Denhez in Blundell 1993: 72).

The most common form of appropriation in Canada has been the cultural appropriation of Aboriginal artwork and artefacts by non-Aboriginal individuals and groups which has been likened to theft by several scholars (Drescher and Trebelco 2009; Townsend-Gault 2004). Like the museum curators discussed earlier, VANOC were also accused of appropriating Aboriginal culture. According to O'Bonsawin the logo was inappropriate because it had been 'stolen' by VANOC and Mexican-born Elena Rivera to be used for corporate and unceremonious purposes. Brigitte Drescher and Amy Trebelco also argue that VANOC were guilty of appropriation because they took an Aboriginal cultural symbol out of the context of its original culture and inferred it with new meaning (2009: 74). In other words, VANOC used a symbol that has been traditionally used to share messages to instead promote supposedly Canadian values.

VANOC were also guilty of appropriation because the logo was used as a commodity. The 2010 Olympic logo became a prominent symbol of VANOC's Olympic brand identity

and marketing campaign as it was “splashed on signs, embroidered on clothes, etched on pins prominently displayed on advertisements around the world” (Fowlie in Drescher and Trebelco 2009: 75). *Vancouver Sun* journalist Shelly Fralic argued that both VANOC and Elena Rivera felt it was necessary that the logo was “charming enough to sell millions of silk-screened t-shirts and baseball caps” (Fralic in Drescher and Trebelco 2009: 75).

VANOC’s appropriation of the inuksuk symbol was followed through at the 2006 Turin Winter Olympic closing ceremony. During the handover portion of the ceremony a gigantic version of the 2010 Olympic logo was artistically constructed by members of the Cirque du Soleil, Ecole de Nationale Cirque and Les 7 Doigts de le Main using “snow-like blocks” (O’Bonsawin 2006: 391). Just like the design process of the logo itself, there was no Aboriginal involvement in building the inuksuk. O’Bonsawin believed that the construction of the inuksuk “explicitly dishonoured the traditional and contemporary function(s) of this symbol” and was “far removed from traditional and functional practice” (2006: 391).

The logo’s appearance at the handover ceremony in Turin was its first major premiere on the world stage. Using non-Aboriginal performers to build the logo VANOC further reduced the symbol’s indigeneity and subsequently enabled the logo to better represent Canada’s Games. Overall, the appropriation of the inuksuk was considered highly offensive by O’Bonsawin, while Chief Edward John pointed out that if the Aboriginal community had used the Olympic committee’s five rings for any artistic purpose, “they’d have us in court faster than you can say ‘Vancouver 2010’” (Inwood 2005b: A6).

The most important conclusion to make is that the logo’s image has been taken out of its original context as a “symbolic object of veneration” (Heyes 2002: 134) and inserted into a new one by Rivera and VANOC. Inherent in the logo is the myth of social harmony between Canada’s Aboriginal people and the rest of the country, much like the myth of French



imperiality in Barthes's image of the black soldier in *Myth Today* (1957: 139). This theme of social harmony is also clear in VANOC's explanation of the logo outlined above. This narrative of social harmony, alongside an appropriation of Aboriginal culture, is also present in the 2010 Olympic mascots.

Whilst they may have been recognisable to some Canadians and Olympic viewers, the majority would probably have been clueless as to what animals they were intended to be. Thankfully, VANOC informs us of the facts. The mascots were announced on November 27th, 2007 as Miga the Sea Bear, Sumi the Thunderbird, Quatchi the Sasquatch, and Mukmuk the marmot (top to bottom right, figure 22).



Figure 22 (VANOC 2007).

Unlike the Inuit official logo, these mascots were inspired by West Coast Aboriginal legend. VANOC described how the mascots represented “the people, geography and spirit of British Columbia and Canada while personifying the essence of the 2010 Winter Games” (2008b: 50). According to VANOC:

The West Coast of Canada is a magical place, with gigantic trees, soaring mountains and a restless ocean. The oral traditions of local First Nations tell us of the mythic journeys of Legendary Beings, Transformers and Guardian Spirits. The stories of the Ancestors, and their hereditary names, songs and legends, all reflect the values of the diverse First Nations cultures and their relationships with the land (2008b: 50)

The mascots relied upon showcasing West Coast Aboriginal traditional culture and legends rather than representing contemporary aspects of their culture and society. The only characteristic, apart from the names, that helps the international audience identify the Aboriginal relevance to the mascots is the Paralympic mascot Sumi’s hat, which has a distinctive and familiar quality to the images of Aboriginal culture seen earlier in the bid books. If you exclude the Paralympic mascot all together, there are no obvious markers of Aboriginality.

Another eye-catching element is the mascots’ red mittens which are emblazoned with the Canadian maple leaf. This is emphasised by the mascots’ waving pose and, as a result, dominates over the Paralympic mascot’s Aboriginal design. The use of the Canadian flag colours also helps to reinforce the 2010 Olympics as Canada’s games with any explicit reference to Aboriginal culture being sidelined. Furthermore, the colourful nature of the mascots and the use of animals helps to market them as merchandise.

As mentioned in my methodology, one of the main purposes of Olympic mascots is to mass-produce souvenirs and toys that can be sold to the public. The adoption of Aboriginal symbols in the Canadian souvenir trade is not unique to the 2010 Olympic mascots. Valda Blundell describes how the Aboriginal souvenir trade is a lucrative, yet controversial, multi-million dollar business in Canada (Blundell 1993: 65). It is relevant to the issue of appropriation because according to Blundell there is little direct involvement of Aboriginal people in the production of these souvenirs. She explains that while “souvenirs depict aboriginal cultural forms, such commodities are rarely produced or sold by Aboriginal peoples.” As a result, “many of these souvenirs depict aboriginal peoples in distorting, stereotypical ways” (Blundell 1993: 65) because they “rarely portray them as they live today” (Blundell 1993:73).

This is also applicable to VANOC’s 2010 Olympic mascots which instead of attempting to provide a contemporary representation of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage, present mythical interpretations of Aboriginal legendary animals. The implications of using these cuddly characters as mascots, ultimately to sell merchandise, trivialises and devalues the FHFN partnership with VANOC in the 2010 Olympics. Instead of being important contributors to the 2010 Olympics, in the hope of improving Aboriginal relations with the state and their position in Canadian society, they became toys to be sold to the Olympic audience. An out-dated, stereotypical representation of Canada’s Aboriginal culture and society continued to be emphasised by VANOC at the 2010 Olympic opening ceremony.

### **The 2010 Olympic Opening Ceremony**

The FHFN and other Canadian Aboriginal groups played an integral role in the beginning of the opening ceremony as they welcomed the world to the 2010 Olympics. According to Furlong, the opening ceremony was the ideal opportunity to “give the world a real insight into Canada’s view of the Aboriginal community” (2011: 195). In order to produce an ‘authentic’ representation of Canada’s Aboriginal community VANOC invited members of the twelve linguistic Aboriginal groups to take part. Furlong also sought the blessing of Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations regarding the ideas.

Previously, in September 2009 Fontaine had been hired by 2010 Olympic sponsor RBS as a special advisor for the company to encourage Aboriginal people to get involved with the Games (*The Telegraph Journal* 2009: B5). Fontaine believed that the 2010 Olympics “was a cultural celebration” and “a unique opportunity for First Nations and aboriginal communities to speak to the world” (*The Telegraph Journal* 2009: B5). Thus, when VANOC and Furlong sought Fontaine’s blessing for his opening ceremony plans was not surprising. Indeed, Fontaine believed VANOC’s plans for the opening ceremony were a significant step in the history of the relationship between Aboriginal people and Canada. Speaking before the event he declared that it would do “more to connect Aboriginal Canada with the rest of Canada than what we would have been able to achieve in a hundred years” (Furlong 2011: 197).

The way that Furlong recounts his exchange with Fontaine is overly romanticised in his Olympic memoir and is indicative of the general approach taken by VANOC to portray Canada’s Aboriginal heritage in the opening ceremony. This is because it silences any protest

from other Aboriginal people towards the event as well as the social injustices that many continue to face through land claim and residential school abuse cases. Clearly, taking these factors into account would not have made an attractive opening ceremony and would have hindered VANOC's narrative of social harmony. Instead, VANOC portrayed contemporary Aboriginal people as historical figures in a romanticised and mythologised narrative that appropriated and misrepresented Aboriginal culture.

The plans outlined by Furlong in his Olympic memoir were brought vividly to life at the beginning of the opening ceremony. After an announcement about the 2010 Olympics taking place on the traditional lands of the FHFN, their symbols were projected off the floor and a representative from each group entered the arena to address the audience. Dressed in their unique ceremonial dress, the FHFN representatives took their place next to their own rising totem pole which symbolised their warm welcome to the world. As Aboriginal representatives from Canada's other Aboriginal communities joined the FHFN onstage, a voiceover announced that "on behalf of all Canadians the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada welcome the athletes" (IOC 2010a). The 2010 Olympic opening ceremony was not the first time that Canadian Aboriginal people had performed at celebration events.

In 1966 members of the Musqueam and Squamish bands were invited to perform a dance at the centennial celebration of the unification of Vancouver Island and mainland B.C. Susan Roy describes how the performers had painted faces and were armed with spears as they "mimicked warriors in pursuit of their enemies" (2002: 57). This representation of Aboriginal culture is a stark contrast to the welcoming theme present at the 2010 Olympic opening ceremony. At the 1966 celebrations Aboriginal people are not actively welcoming the audience through their performance, while at the 2010 Olympics it was the central theme. Despite the difference between the performances, both were examples of Aboriginal people

taking control of the representation of their own culture.

Roy explains how events, like the 1966 centennial celebration, allowed Aboriginal people the “opportunity to appropriate and to reshape representations of dominant history for their own purposes enabling them to ‘upgrade’ their Aboriginal identity in the public’s eye” (2002: 63). Historian James Clifford believed such events allowed “indigenous populations from around the world to reinvent and revive the traditions, languages, cosmologies and values” that had been lost (Roy 2002: 64). However, the opportunities afforded to Canadian Aboriginal people were loaded with political and economic purpose.

For most organisers of such events the inclusion of Aboriginal representations of their cultures and societies were vital to increasing public interest in their events. During the 1966 celebrations, secretary of the organising committee, L.H. Canace, outlined how they were anxious to include Aboriginal people so “they may express their art and culture” to the rest of B.C. as well as guests and tourists who would be there (Roy 2002: 66). Roy explains how the Indian Advisory Council was established to “ensure that Aboriginal peoples would participate in the celebrations thus ensuring increased tourist dollars” (2002: 65). Aboriginal representation was also important to the organisers of Expo ‘67 as we saw earlier in the literature review with Rutherford and Miller’s article (2006).

These two examples show the organisers’ awareness of the potential tourism benefits that would occur as a result of Aboriginal people displaying their own culture. Thus, Aboriginal culture is being packaged as part of what Hall has termed an ‘imaging strategy’ to generate tourism, as discussed earlier. In the case of the Aboriginal welcome at the beginning of the opening ceremony, the audience was presented with a traditional and vibrant cultural representation of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage.

O'Bonsawin highlights the variety of Aboriginal cultural symbols on display during the Aboriginal welcome:

The First Nations of the Northwest were recognized for things such as chilkat blankets, masks, cedar hats...the Inuit were described in association with the nasaq, kamik, amutiq, silapaq, and quilaut drum; the Métis were associated with such things as the capote, the Red River coat, the Métis sash, traditional beading, embroidered shawls, and woollen and buckskin embroidered leggings; the First Nations of the Prairies were described in regards to powwow traditions, including the jingle dress, the fancy shawl dance, men's traditional dance and regalia...and finally, the First Nations of the East were recognized for such things as the eagle feather hand fan, sweetgrass, and the porcupine roach (2010: 257)

While the symbols on display were more representative of Canada's diverse Aboriginal community compared to other aspects of VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, they still lacked any reference to contemporary Aboriginal society or culture.

We are not presented with a contemporary view of Canada's Aboriginal community but instead something similar to the 'Performing Indian' paradigm witnessed at other national and international events. As Francis argues, "our views of what constitutes an Indian today are as much bound up with myth, prejudice and ideology as earlier versions were" (1992: 6). Furthermore, as we saw earlier in Adese's article, we are presented with a narrative that presents the relationship between Aboriginal people and the rest of Canada as socially harmonious. Before viewers can get used to this idea, however, Aboriginal presence in the

opening ceremony ends.

In the artistic programme, 'Landscape of a Dream,' which was intended to celebrate the diversity of Canada's history, geography and culture, no Aboriginal people are present. The programme began with 'The Hymns of the North' as the stadium was plunged into pitch black and the floor turned into a frozen tundra. Lights sparkled as small groups of people made their way across the ice when it begins to crack. As a result the people become separated symbolising the separation of Northern Canada's communities into the vast landscape that we know today. The whole segment had a magical touch to it with sparkling lights as a 50-foot polar bear loomed over the stadium floor. Covered in lights, the bear symbolised an Aboriginal mythical symbol known as the 'Spirit Bear.' In the next section, the Spirit Bear collapsed and the ice transformed into water as whales appeared to swim across the stadium floor. The next segment was entitled 'The Rhythms of the Fall' as the arena was transformed into a tall forest and the centrepiece chandelier turned into a circle of majestic redwood trees.

These scenes were part of the 'Landscape of a Dream' section which emphasised the theme of the Canadian landscape and wilderness. The representation of the wilderness in the opening ceremony is very romantic. They present a mystical view of Canada in an attempt to explain the country's origin story and show a harmonious relationship between the land and Canadians. However, the Aboriginal community's close connection to the land is ignored. Nathan Kalman-Lamb explores this theme in his article, 'A Portrait of This Country: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies' (2012).

According to Kalman-Lamb the appearance of Canada's Aboriginal people at the beginning of the evening, and their subsequent disappearance, produces a narrative which "casts Aboriginal people as the first multicultural [sic], but also creates the impression that



they are part of a past that no longer exists” (2012: 15). Kalman-Lamb believes that “it is a form of historicization that erases the present-day struggles of Indigenous peoples in Canada by portraying them as anachronistic products of a long-passed historical moment” (2012: 23). These struggles centre hugely around land rights. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the battle over reclaiming land is an ongoing struggle - particularly in B.C. Thus, to an audience aware of these issues, the lack of Aboriginal presence in the story of the Canadian landscape would raise eyebrows.

In the opening ceremony, Aboriginal people are visibly excluded from the Canadian landscape as it appears in the *Landscape of a Dream*.<sup>9</sup> Arguably adopting this type of narrative would not have been as attractive to an international audience. Thus, VANOC presented stereotypical Aboriginal cultural symbols and included a welcoming group of Aboriginal representatives which promoted a narrative of advertising, romanticising and embracing Canada’s Aboriginal heritage which appealed to an international audience. Furthermore, it could possibly be taken as move to reassure non-indigenous Canadians of the state’s relationship with its Aboriginal population and an attempt to erase any current tensions. Instead, VANOC sought to make non-indigenous, as well as Aboriginal Canadians, proud of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage (Furlong 2011: 196).

Overall, analysing the narrative of embracing Canada’s Aboriginal heritage in the opening ceremony, and elsewhere in VANOC’s 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign, relied predominantly on stereotypical images of Aboriginal dancers, artwork and cultural symbols such as totem poles and inuksuit. The main impression one can garner from these images is a Canadian Aboriginal heritage which is almost devoid of human presence or specific cultural references to the West-Coast culture of the FHFN. The images also followed a general trend of representing a particular romantic and mythological notion of Aboriginal

culture that is present in Canadian tourism.

By promoting this type of representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage and excluding a more contemporary portrayal, VANOC possibly wanted to impress the international audience and in turn provide tourists with 'authentic' Aboriginal cultural experiences if they were to visit. Furthermore, this narrative served as reassurance for the Canadian public that the state's relationship with Aboriginal people was characterised by social harmony. In order to substantiate this claim it would be useful to compare VANOC's promotion of Canada's Aboriginal heritage to that of Aboriginal organisations in Canada. This chapter commences this task by looking at the representation of Aboriginal culture and society by the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C. (ATBC).

#### **'Authentic' Aboriginal Tourism and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C.**

The organisation's website seeks to promote more 'authentic' Aboriginal cultural experiences for non-Natives. This approach is different to how Canada's Aboriginal heritage has been previously used by tourism promoters. Michael Dawson discusses how, along with emphasising Canada's Britishness, Aboriginal culture was used by B.C. tourism promoters because it was seen as "increasingly uncommon and appeared to be suitably 'foreign' to visitors from the United States" (2004: 164). Aboriginal heritage was represented on many occasions by the Greater Vancouver Tourist Association (GVTA) during the 1950s. GVTA comptroller A.L. Woods emphasised the potential for B.C.'s "interesting Indian lore" to "be 'sold' to the rest of the world" which could "prove of great value in luring more tourists and interesting them in something distinctively British Columbian" (Dawson 2004: 166). In order to promote B.C.'s Aboriginal heritage the Totem-Land society was established and headed by

director of the GVTA Harry Duker. The aim of the society was in “concentrating solely on increasing the use of Aboriginal themes in promoting British Columbia” (Dawson 2004: 166). One such example was a proposal to change the motto on the B.C. licence plate to ‘Totem Land’ (Dawson 2004: 167).

Dawson argues that B.C. tourism promoters, like the Totem-Land Society, commodified Aboriginal culture and “encouraged visitors and the host population to embrace a selective reimagining of the province’s past” and “substituted ‘imperial nostalgia’ for the complicated and often ugly realities of colonialism” (2004: 176). This is similar to VANOC’s promotion of Canada’s Aboriginal heritage which silenced Canada’s controversial historical treatment of its Aboriginal population for a more attractive and romantic representation that portrayed Canadian values of tolerance and diversity. VANOC used Aboriginal cultural symbols as metonyms to represent Canada’s Aboriginal heritage similar to the Totem-Land Society’s ambitions for the totem pole. Both organisations used icons that would more likely be highly familiar to a non-indigenous audience.

Meanwhile, the main focus of the ATBC involves “growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Aboriginal tourism industry” (2013a). They seek to achieve this by working alongside “tourism, business, education and government organizations to help ensure B.C.’s Aboriginal tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promote them to visitors and local residents” (2013a). Furthermore, the ATBC’s vision focuses on producing a “healthy, prosperous, strong, respectful and dynamic Aboriginal tourism industry” and “sharing authentic high quality products that exceed visitor expectations” (ATBC 2013a). There are two websites, one for tourists and the other a corporate site detailing specific operational information about the ATBC. This chapter looks at the former.

The travel site includes extensive information about the diverse Aboriginal cultural experiences available in B.C. along with itineraries, a stories blog, accommodation tips and downloadable pdf guides for each area of B.C. One of the guides I looked at was the example that focused on the coastal-mountain location of Vancouver and provided a brief list of activities, accommodation and restaurants (2013c). In the guide's introduction the ATBC invites the prospective tourist to:

Discover the rich and vibrant Aboriginal cultures of Vancouver's Coast and Mountains. Explore the area's myths and legends, enjoy incomparable Aboriginal hospitality, and discover how time-honoured traditions and North America's first peoples still thrive in a modern world (ATBC 2013b: 2).

Instead of being saturated with images of stereotypical Aboriginal symbols such as masks and totem poles, the images included in the guide show people engaged in Aboriginal experiences including carving, canoeing and crafting.

The ATBC also offers itineraries which allow the tourist to learn about contemporary Aboriginal culture and society. One of the many examples is the "Chilcotin Cultural Adventures" trip which invites tourists to "learn to fish Aboriginal-style and discover the vibrant and living First Nations culture of the area" (ATBC 2013c). This ethos is accompanied by images of Aboriginal tour guides, the cultural experiences on offer and snapshots of contemporary Aboriginal people (figure 25; figure 26).



Figure 25 (ATBC 2013a).



Figure 26 (ATBC 2013e)

Compared to VANOC's representation of Aboriginal heritage the ATBC website offers a more vibrant illustration of Aboriginal culture and society which is embellished with photos of Aboriginal tour guides and community members. This is different to features like the 2010 Olympic logo and mascots which were characterised by a complete lack of Aboriginal people. Furthermore, in comparison to the historicised view of Aboriginal people in the opening ceremony, many of the ATBC's images website showcase a more contemporary cultural representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage.

The ATBC organisation and its website is one example of how a more contemporary and relevant representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage can be created without

compromising its attractiveness to tourists. This makes VANOC's narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage all the more puzzling. To some extent it is understandable why VANOC chose to ignore Canada's colonial past and the current social injustices in its narrative. However, it seems like a missed opportunity to showcase Canada's Aboriginal heritage in a more contemporary way that would have better accompanied the role that the FHFN held as co-hosts. Nevertheless, VANOC presented us with a historicised narrative of Canada's Aboriginal heritage that appropriated and misrepresented Aboriginal cultural symbols. This dissertation will now conclude by outlining the type of future research needed to further interrogate the two narratives discussed in this dissertation.

## **CONCLUSION**

At the 2010 Olympic closing ceremony, John Furlong delivered a passionate, heartfelt speech about how he thought the Games had bettered Canada. In his speech, Furlong waxed lyrical about how the 2010 Olympics made Canadians “more united, more in love with our country and more connected with each other than ever before” (IOC 2010b). He continued to explain how the event made the country less mysterious to the rest of the world with its “humble Canadian story” (IOC 2010b). The romanticisation in Furlong’s speech was indicative of the way VANOC promoted the two narratives of winter sport and Canada’s Aboriginal heritage through images in its 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign.

Throughout this dissertation I have attempted to show how the VBC and VANOC’s images promoted these two narratives. I proposed that VANOC’s struggles in maximising the economic potential of hosting amidst a poor financial climate led to the organisation seeking other benefits. Under consideration in this dissertation was the potential for the 2010 Olympics to attract tourism from abroad and foster a ‘feel-good’ factor amongst the Canadian public. I argued that the vehicles for pursuing these benefits were two mythologised and romanticised narratives that enhanced typical Canadian values which marketed the country uniquely in front of international and domestic audiences. While the former audience would be attracted into visiting Canada, the latter would be reminded of the common values that united them.

In chapter four I argued that romanticised images of Canadian Olympians, Canadian crowds and the national pastime hockey featured prominently. These images were, in effect, ‘sold’ to the international and domestic audience as ‘authentic’ representations of the host and

depicted a nation bound together by their passion for winter sport. This type of representation is of course not unusual given that it was a winter sport event. However, as Vancouver is not typically associated as being a winter environment, this type of narrative helped to position Vancouver as a Winter Olympic city. I supported this argument by providing examples of Canadian Olympians celebrating, Canadian spectators cheering, and Canadians engaging in recreational activity.

I also argued that the images which marketed Vancouver and Canada as passionate about winter sport, benefited from the performance of Team Canada during the 2010 Olympics. I argue that they possibly helped attract increased tourism and reminded Canadians that they all shared a passion for winter sport. I continued this argument in my analysis of two of the posters that were used to promote the 2010 Olympics. I explained how these images helped to reinforce Vancouver in a winter Olympic setting whilst also showcasing its costal-mountain location. Congruently, I argued that these posters also emphasised the 2010 Olympics as Canada's Games with its use of red, white, maple leaf motif and the motto "With Glowing Hearts."

Another theme that was discussed in chapter four was the relationship between Canadians, the land and the 'Northern myth' through an analysis of VANOC's images of hockey. I argued that two images in particular helped reinforce the connection between Canadians, hockey and the land from childhood into adulthood. Furthermore, both of the images emphasised hockey as an example of a natural Canadian adaptability to their harsh winter environment that is integral to the 'Northern myth.' Another element of 'Northern myth' that is present in these two images is its racist representation of Canadian society. While the identities of the figures in the two images are unclear I argued that they hinted at how hockey has the ability to breach gender and ethnic boundaries to appeal to everyone. One



image that did explicitly represent the racist element of the 'Northern myth' was a screenshot of cardboard cut-out white, masculine hockey players. I concluded chapter four by summarising how VANOC's images of sport helped produce a mythologised and romanticised narrative of winter sport that emphasised Canadian values such as adaptability, perseverance and rigour.

In chapter five I argued that Canada's Aboriginal culture was appropriated, romanticised and mythologised through the images that the VBC and VANOC produced in order to depict a harmonious relationship between Canadians and their Aboriginal heritage. This narrative of embracing Canada's Aboriginal heritage not only possibly appealed to an international audience of tourists but also created a 'feel-good' factor amongst the Canadian public reminding them of their shared values of tolerance and diversity. Amongst the images I analysed include: images of Aboriginal culture from the bid period which presented an out-dated portrayal of Canada's Aboriginal population, the 2010 Olympic logo and mascots which appropriated Inuit culture and West-Coast myth, and the scenes of Aboriginal dance at the opening ceremony.

I explained how the VBC and VANOC misrepresented Aboriginal culture and society similar to the paradigms of the 'Performing Indian' and the 'Vanishing Indian' in the images they used. Furthermore, I argued that the representation of Canada's Aboriginal heritage lacked any reference to contemporary Aboriginal society or culture. To support this argument I proposed an alternative depiction of Aboriginal culture produced by Aboriginal people themselves with a look at the images on the ATBC's website. I argued that they represented a more contemporary view of Canada's Aboriginal culture which contrasted VANOC's mythologised and romanticised narrative. I believe that VANOC missed an opportunity to capitalise on their partnership with the FHFN to create a truly unique representation of a

host's Aboriginal culture.

Overall, this dissertation has attempted to analyse the two mythologised and romanticised narratives of winter sport and Canada's Aboriginal culture. However, more work could be done to consider some of the comparisons that can be made between the two narratives and how they operate in relation to each other. While I do not have sufficient space to fully investigate this there are two points that can be made. Firstly, the Canadian landscape is an integral characteristic of both narratives. While the first narrative of winter sport explicitly showcases the connection between Canadians, winter sport and the land, the narrative of Aboriginal culture has a more subtle but controversial relationship with the land. This is because VANOC's partnership with the FHFN resulted from recognising that the event was taking place on their ancestral lands. Furthermore, the issue of land claims remains a live debate in Canada, particularly in the host region B.C. However, Canada's Aboriginal population scarcely features in the Canadian landscape that is featured in VANOC's 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. This is a contrast to the winter sport narrative which prominently places mostly white, masculine Canadians onto the Canadian landscape.

Another comparison that can be made between the two narratives is how they both exclude or marginalise certain aspects of Canadian society. The images in the first narrative helped to reinforce the racist concept of the 'Northern myth' while certain elements of the Aboriginal narrative excluded west-coast Aboriginal culture or submerged Canada's Aboriginal heritage so it was no longer visible. More troublingly these incarnations of the two narratives were used to market Canada uniquely to the international audience as a way of increasing tourism. Furthermore, they helped to positively remind Canadians of their, albeit cosmetic, connection to winter sport and their Aboriginal culture which in turn could boost

the 2010 Olympic s 'feel-good' factor.

Despite these considerations about the relationship between the two narratives and their possible implications on the international and domestic audience, more research needs to be done. Further investigation would also help to determine whether these two narratives were promoted deliberately by the VBC and VANOC and whether they successfully 'sold' Canada. I propose that more research should be done once the VANOC records become available to the public to investigate how they constructed their 2010 Olympic brand identity and marketing campaign. In the meantime, however, a research project into the way the international and domestic audiences consumed the two narratives discussed here is needed. There are two ways this can be done.

Firstly, we need to research whether the 2010 Olympics has increased Canadian tourism figures and undergo in-depth public opinion analysis to determine how the promotion of Canada's passion for winter sport and its Aboriginal heritage influenced their decision to visit. Secondly, by performing nationwide opinion polls across Canada we might be able to study how the public responded to these two narratives. By doing this we could gain a better understanding into how mega-events, such as the Olympics, create specific representations of the host in order to seduce the global and home audiences.

Hopefully my dissertation has provided a different insight into the promotion of host countries at the Olympic Games by analysing the images produced and proliferated by host organisations. More importantly, I hope it will inspire others to analyse the deeper meanings behind the images of host nations in order to interrogate how they have the ability to romanticise and mythologise the cultures and societies they seek to represent. Only time will tell whether the romanticisation and mythologisation of Canadian narratives seen at the 2010 Olympics, will be repeated at future Canadian mega-events.

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